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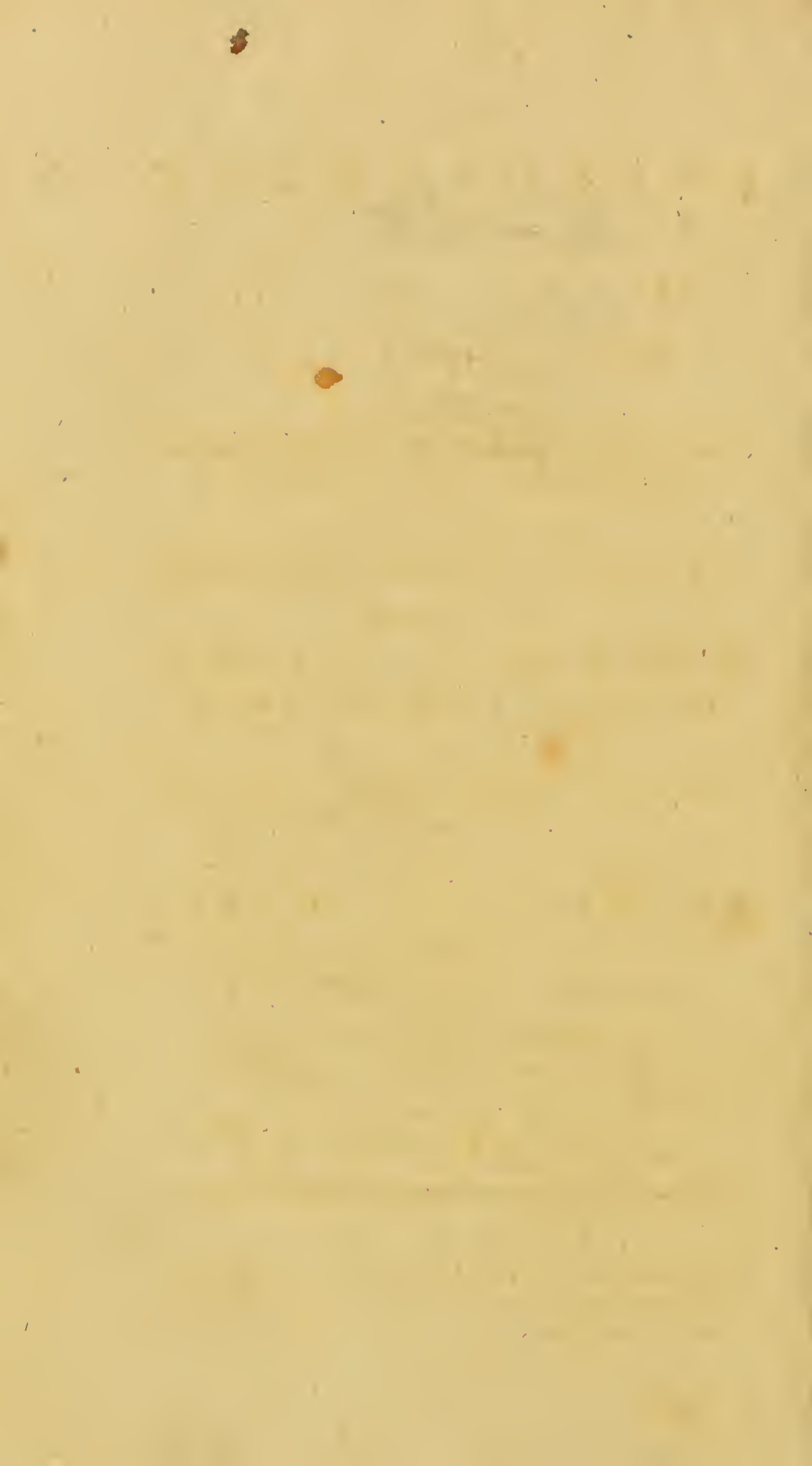
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1790  
Dear Mr. H.

Permanence  
June 12<sup>th</sup>  
1790



THE  
IMPROVEMENT  
OF THE  
MIND:  
SECOND PART.

WITH  
Various REMARKS and RULES about the  
Communication of useful KNOWLEDGE.

Also a DISCOURSE on the  
EDUCATION of Children and Youth.

To which are added,  
REMNANTS OF TIME,  
employed in PROSE and VERSE,

OR  
Short ESSAYS and COMPOSURES in PROSE and  
VERSE on Various Subjects;  
BEING THE  
POSTHUMOUS WORKS

Of the late REVEREND  
ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

Published from his MANUSCRIPT by  
D. JENNINGS, D.D.

AND  
P. DODDRIDGE, D.D.

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L O N D O N:  
PRINTED FOR J. BUCKLAND, AND T. LONGMAN, IN  
PATER-NOSTER-ROW; T. FIELD; AND C. DILLY,  
IN THE POULTRY.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**H E author's name, which is prefixed to this book, renders it altogether needless for us to say any thing in order to recommend it; and we need not assure any judicious reader, who has been conversant with Dr. *Watts's* writings, that this is the genuine work of that excellent author; for he cannot fail of discerning the doctor's easy stile, and beautiful manner of expression in every page. We esteem it an honour done us by that truly great man, that he was pleased, by his last will, to entrust us with his manuscripts which he designed for the press; however, he lived to publish several of those himself, after his will was made, so that not many remain to be published by us. Some indeed there are remaining, which

he did originally intend for the press, but his broken state of health did not permit him to finish them, and they are left too imperfect to be ever published. Of this sort, among others, is *the larger Discourse on Psalmody*, which he gave notice of his intention to publish in the preface to the second edition of his *Hymns*, when he withdrew the *shorter Essay* on that subject, which was annexed to the first edition. There are also among his manuscripts, some tracts relating to a doctrinal controversy, which the doctor had been engaged in, but which the world seems to be tired of: so that, most probably, this *second part of the Improvement of the Mind*, with the *Discourse on Education*, and *some additions to the Reliquiæ Juveniles*, are all the posthumous works of Dr. *Watts* that will ever be printed.

As to this work in particular, a considerable part of it was corrected for the press by the doctor's own hand; and as to the rest of it, he did not leave it so far unfinished as should, in his own judgment, discourage the publishing it; for he has  
left

*The P R E F A C E.*

v

left this note in a paper along with it,  
“ Though this book, or the second volume  
“ of the Improvement of the Mind, is  
“ not so far finished as I could wish, yet  
“ I leave it among the number of books  
“ corrected for the press; for it is very easy  
“ for any person of genius and science to  
“ finish it, and publish it in a form suffi-  
“ ciently useful to the world.” The cor-  
rections we have presumed to make are com-  
paratively but *few* and *trivial*; and when,  
now and then, it was thought needful to  
add a line or two for the illustration of any  
passage, it is generally put in the form of  
a note at the foot of the page.

It may perhaps be expected we should  
make some apology, for delaying the pub-  
lishing of this book so long after the au-  
thor's death; a book that has been so much  
expected and so earnestly desired, as appears  
by several letters found in the doctor's  
study, from eminent persons and from  
learned societies. There are various causes  
that have contributed to the delay, which  
the world need not be informed of; but  
the remote distance of our habitations, and  
the



the multiplicity of business in which each of us is stately engaged, are circumstances pretty generally known, and which we hope will be admitted in excuse for some part of the delay, and some part the book-fellers must answer for. However we are the less solicitous to apologize for not publishing this book sooner, as we are satisfied it will be welcome now it comes ; and that those who, upon reading the first volume, have so earnestly desired the second, will not be disappointed when they read it.

WE have only to add, our most sincere wishes and prayers, that a book so admirably suited to improve the minds of men, especially of the rising generation, and to promote universal goodness, as this appears to be, may be attended with a blessing from on high.

*June 26,*  
1751.

D. JENNINGS.  
P. DODDRIDGE.



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T H E  
I M P R O V E M E N T  
O F T H E  
M I N D.

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The Second P A R T.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

**T**HE chief design of the former part of this book, is to lead us into proper methods for the *improvement of our knowledge*; let us now consider what are the best means of *improving the minds of others*, and of *communicating* to them the *knowledge* which we have acquired. If the treasures of the mind should be hoarded up and concealed, they would profit none besides the possessor; and even his advantage by the possession would be poor and narrow, in comparison of what the same treasures would yield, both to himself and

B

to

## 2 I N T R O D U C T I O N.

to the world, by a free communication and diffusion of them. Large quantities of knowledge acquired and reserved by one man, like heaps of gold and silver, would contract a sort of rust and disagreeable aspect, by lying in everlasting secrecy and silence; but they are burnished and glitter by perpetual circulation, through the tribes of mankind.

THE two chief ways of conveying knowledge to others, are, that of *verbal instruction* to our disciples, or by *writing and publishing* our thoughts to the world.

HERE therefore I shall first propose some observations which relate to the conveyance of knowledge to others by, *regular lectures of verbal instruction*, or by *conversation*; I shall represent several of the chief prejudices of which learners are in danger, with directions to guard against them, and then mention some of the easiest and most effectual ways of *convincing persons of their mistakes*, and of dealing with their understandings, when they labour under the *power of prejudice*. I shall afterwards add, by way of appendix, an essay written many years ago, on the subject of *education*, when I designed a more complete treatise of it,



## C H A P. I.

*Methods of teaching and reading Lectures.*

**H**E that has learned any thing thoroughly, in a *clear and methodical manner*, and has attained a *distinct perception*, and an *ample survey* of the whole subject, is generally best prepared to teach the same subject in a *clear and easy method*; for having acquired a large and distinct idea of it, and made it familiar to himself by frequent *meditation, reading, and occasional discourse*; he is supposed to see it on all sides, to grasp it with all its appendices and relations in one survey, and is better able to represent it to the learner in all its views, with all its properties, relations and consequences. He knows which view or side of the subject to hold out first to his disciple, and how to propose to his understanding that part of it which is easiest to apprehend; and also knows how to set it in such a light, as is most likely to allure and to assist his further enquiry.

BUT it is not every one who is a *great scholar* that always becomes the *happiest teacher*, even tho' he may have a clear conception, and a methodical as well as an ex-

tensive survey of the branches of any science. He must also be *well acquainted with words*, as well as *ideas*, in a proper variety; that when his disciple does not take in the ideas in one form of expression, he may change the phrase into several forms, till at last he hits the understanding of his scholar, and enlightens it in the just idea of truth.

BESIDES this, a tutor should be a person of a *happy and condescending temper*, who has patience to bear with a slowness of perception, or want of sagacity in some learners. He should also have *much candor of soul*, to pass a gentle censure on their impertinences, and to pity them in their mistakes, and use every mild and engaging method for insinuating knowledge into those who are willing and diligent in seeking truth, as well as reclaiming those who are wandering into error. But of this I have spoken somewhat already, in a chapter of the former part, and shall have occasion to express something more of it shortly.

A VERY pretty and useful way to lead a person into the knowledge of any particular truth is, by *question and answer*, which is the *Socratical method of disputation*, and therefore I refer the reader to that chapter or section which treats of it. On this account, *dialogues* are used as a polite and pleasant method of leading gentlemen and ladies

ladies into some of the sciences, who seek not the most accurate and methodical treasure of learning.

BUT the most usual, and perhaps the most excellent way of instructing students in any of the sciences is, by *reading lectures*, as tutors in the *academy* do to their pupils.

THE first work is to choose a *book well written*, which contains a *short scheme or abstract of that science*; or at least, it should not be a very copious and diffusive treatise. Or, if the tutor knows not any such book already written, he should draw up an *abstract of that science* himself, containing the most substantial and important parts of it, disposed in such a method as he best approves.

LET a chapter or section of this be read daily by the learner, on which the tutor should paraphrase in this manner, namely,

HE should *explain both words and ideas* more largely, and especially what is *dark and difficult* should be *opened and illustrated*, partly by various forms of speech, and partly by apt similitudes and examples. Where the *sense* of the author is *dubious*, it must also be *fixed and determined*.

WHERE the *arguments* are *strong and cogent*, they should be *enforced* by some further paraphrase, and the truth of the inferences should be made plainly to appear.

Where the *arguments* are *weak* and *insufficient*, they should be either *confirmed* or *rejected* as *useless*; and new arguments, if need be, should be added to support that doctrine.

WHAT is *treated very concisely* in the author should be *amplified*, and where several things are *laid closely* together, they must be *taken to pieces* and *opened by parts*.

WHERE the tutor *differs* from the author which he reads, he should gently point out and *confute his mistakes*.

WHERE the *method* and *order* of the book is just and happy, it should be *pursued* and *commended*; where it is *defective* and *irregular*, it should be *corrected*.

THE *most necessary*, the most remarkable and useful parts of that treatise, or of that science, should be *peculiarly recommended* to the learners, and *pressed upon them*, that they would retain it in memory; and what is more *unnecessary* or *superfluous* should be *distinguished*, lest the learner should spend too much time in the more needless parts of a science.

THE *various ends, uses and services* of that science, or of any part of it, should be also *declared* and *exemplified*, as far as the tutor hath opportunity and furniture to do it; particularly in *mathematics* and *natural philosophy*.

AND



AND if there be any thing *remarkably beautiful or defective in the style* of the writer, it is proper for the tutor to make a *just remark* upon it.

WHILE he is reading and explaining any particular treatise to his pupils, he may *compare the different editions* of the same book, or *different writers* upon the same subject: he should inform them where that subject is treated by other authors, which they may peruse, and lead his disciples thereby to a further *elucidation, confirmation or improvement* of that theme of discourse in which he is instructing them.

IT is alluring and agreeable to the learner also, now and then to be entertained with some *historical remarks, or any occurrences or useful stories* which the tutor has met with, relating to the several parts of such a science, provided he does not put off his pupils merely with such stories, and neglect to give them a solid and rational information of the theme in hand. Teachers should endeavour, as far as possible, to join *profit and pleasure* together, and mingle *delight with their instructions*; but at the same time they must take heed, that they do not merely amuse the ears, and gratify the fancy of their disciples, without enriching their minds.

IN reading lectures of instruction, let the teacher be very solicitous that the learners

*take up his meaning*, and therefore he should frequently enquire, whether he expresses himself intelligibly, whether they understand his sense, and take in all his ideas, as he endeavours to convey them in his own forms of speech.

It is necessary that he who instructs others, should use the *most proper style* for the conveyance of his ideas easily into the minds of those who hear him: and though in *teaching the sciences*, a person is not confined to the same rules by which we must govern our language in *conversation*, for he must necessarily make use of many *terms of art and hard words*, yet he should never use them merely to shew his learning, nor affect sounding language without necessity; a caution which we shall soon farther inculcate.

I THINK it very convenient and proper, if not absolutely necessary, that when a tutor reads a *following lecture* to his pupils, he should *run over the foregoing lecture in questions* proposed to them, and by this means acquaint himself with their daily proficiency\*.

It

\* Note, This precaution, tho' never to be neglected, is of especial importance when a pupil is entering on any new branch of learning, where it is absolutely necessary the fundamental definitions and principles should not only be clearly understood, but should be rendered very familiar to the mind: and probably most tutors have found young persons sadly bewildered, as they have gone on in their lectures, for want of a little more patience and care in this respect.

It is in vain for the learner to object, *surely we are not school-boys, to say our lessons again; we came to be taught, and not to be catechised and examined.* But alas! how is it possible for a teacher to proceed in his instructions, if he knows not how far the learner takes in and remembers what he has been taught?

BESIDES, I must generally believe, it is sloth or idleness, it is real ignorance, incapacity or unreasonable pride, that makes a learner refuse to give his teacher an account how far he has profited by his last instructions. For want of this *constant examination*, young gentlemen have spent *some idle and useless years*, even under the daily labors and inspection of a *learned teacher*; and they have returned from the *academy* without the gain of any one *science*, and even with the shameful loss of their *classical* learning, that is, the knowledge of *Greek* and *Latin*, which they had learnt in the grammar-school.

LET the teacher always *accommodate himself to the genius, temper, and capacity of his disciples*, and practise various methods of prudence to allure, persuade and assist every one of them in their pursuit of knowledge.

WHERE the scholar has *less sagacity*, let the teacher enlarge his illustrations; let him search and find out where the learner sticks,  
what

what is the difficulty; and thus let him help the labouring intellect.

WHERE the learner manifests *forward genius*, and a *sprightly curiosity* by *frequent enquiries*; let the teacher oblige such an inquisitive soul by satisfying those questions, as far as may be done by decency and conveniency; and where these enquiries are unseasonable, let him not silence the young enquirer with a *magisterial rebuff*, but with much candor and gentleness postpone those questions, and refer them to a proper hour.

*CURIOSITY* is a useful spring of knowledge: it should be encouraged in *children*, and awakened by frequent and familiar methods of talking with them. It should be indulged in *youth*, but not without a prudent moderation. In those who have *too much*, it should be limited by a wise and gentle restraint or delay, lest by wandering after every thing, they learn nothing to perfection. In those who have *too little*, it should be excited, lest they grow stupid, narrow-spirited, self-satisfied, and never attain a treasure of ideas, or an aptitude of understanding.

LET not the *teacher* demand or expect things too sublime and difficult from the *humble, modest and fearful* disciple: And where such a one gives a just and happy answer, even to plain and easy questions, let him



him have words of commendation and love ready for him. Let him encourage every spark of kindling light, till it grow up to bright evidence and confirmed knowledge.

WHERE he finds a lad *pert, positive and presuming*, let the tutor take every just occasion to shew him his error: let him set the absurdity in complete light before him, and convince him by a full demonstration of his mistake, till he sees and feels it, and learns to be modest and humble.

A *teacher* should not only observe the different spirit and humour among his scholars, but he should watch the various efforts of their reason, and growth of their understanding. He should practise in his young nursery of learning, as a *skilful gardener* does in his vegetable dominions, and apply prudent methods of cultivation to every plant. Let him with a discreet and gentle hand, nip or prune the irregular shoots, let him guard and encourage the tender bud-dings of the understanding, till they be raised to a blossom, and let him kindly cherish the younger fruits.

The *tutor* should take *every occasion* to instil knowledge into his *disciples*, and make use of every occurrence in life, to raise some profitable conversation upon it; he should frequently enquire something of his disciples, that may set their young reason to  
work,

work, and teach them how to form inferences, and to draw one proposition out of another.

*REASON* being that faculty of the mind which he has to deal with in his pupil, let him endeavour by all proper and familiar methods to call it into exercise, and to enlarge the powers of it. He should take frequent opportunities to shew them when an *idea* is clear or confused, when the *proposition* is evident or doubtful, and when an *argument* is feeble or strong. And by this means the minds will be so formed, that whatsoever he proposes with evidence and strength of reason, they will readily receive.

WHEN any *uncommon appearances* arise in the *natural, moral, or political world*, he should invite and instruct them to make their remarks on it, and give them the best reflections of his own, for the improvement of their minds.

HE should by all means make it appear *that he loves his pupils*, and that he seeks nothing so much as their increase of knowledge, and their growth in all valuable acquirements : this will engage their affection to his person, and procure a just attention to his lectures.

AND indeed there is but little hope, that a teacher should obtain any success in his instructions, unless those that hear him have some good degree of esteem and respect

spect for his person and character. And here I cannot but take notice by the way, that it is a matter of infinite and unspeakable injury to the people of any town or parish, where the minister lies under contempt. If he has procured it by his own conduct, he is doubly criminal, because of the injury he does to the souls of them that hear him : but if this contempt and reproach be cast upon him by the wicked, malicious, and unjust censures of men, they must bear all the ill consequences of receiving no good by his labours, and will be accountable hereafter to the great and divine Judge of all.

IT would be very necessary to add in this place (if *tutors* were not well apprized of it before) that since *learners* are obliged to seek a divine blessing on their studies, by fervent prayer to the God of all wisdom, their *tutors* should go before them in this pious practice, and make daily addresses to heaven for the success of their instructions.

## C H A P. II.

*Of an instructive Style.*

**T**HE most necessary, and the most useful character of a style fit for instruction is, that it be *plain, perspicuous and easy*. And here I shall first point out all those errors in style, which diminish or destroy the *perspicuity* of it, and then mention a few directions, how to obtain a perspicuous and easy style.

THE errors of a style which must be avoided by teachers, are these that follow :

I. *THE use of many foreign words, which are not sufficiently naturalized and mingled with the language which we speak or write.* It is true, that in teaching the sciences in *English*, we must sometimes use words borrowed from the *Greek and Latin*, for we have not in *English*, names for a variety of subjects which belong to *learning* ; but when a man affects upon all occasions, to bring in long sounding words from the ancient languages without necessity, and mingles *French* and other *outlandish* terms and phrases, where plain *English* would serve as well, he betrays a vain and foolish genius unbecoming a teacher.

2. *AVOID*



2. *AVOID* a fantastic learned style, borrowed from the various sciences, where the subject and matter do not require the use of them. Don't affect terms of art on every occasion, nor seek to show your learning by sounding words and dark phrases; this is properly called *pedantry*.

YOUNG preachers just come from the schools, are often tempted to fill their sermons with logical and metaphysical terms in explaining the text, and feed their hearers with sonorous words of vanity. This scholastic language, perhaps, may flatter their own ambition, and raise a wonderment at their learning among the staring multitude, without any manner of influence toward the instruction of the ignorant, or the reformation of the immoral or impious: these terms of art are but the tools of an artificer, by which his work is wrought in private; but the tools ought not to appear in the finish'd workmanship.

THERE are some persons so fond of *geometry*, that they bring in lines and circles, tangents and parabolas, theorems, problems and postulates, upon all occasions. Others who have dealt in *astronomy*, borrow even their *nouns* and their *verbs*, in their common discourse, from the stars and planets; instead of saying, *Jacob had twelve sons*, they tell you, *Jacob had as many sons as there are signs in the zodiac*. If they describe an in-

constant

constant person, they make a planet of him, and set him forth in all his appearances, *direct, retrograde and stationary*. If a candle be set behind the screen, they call it *eclipsed*, and tell you fine stories of the orbit and the revolutions, the radii and the limb, or circumference of a cart-wheel.

OTHERS again dress up their sense in *chymical* language; extracts and oils, salts and essences, exalt and invigorate their discourses: a great wit with them, is *sublimated spirit*; and a blockhead, is *caput mortuum*. A certain doctor in his bill, swells in his own idea when he tells the town, that he has been counsellor to the counsellors of several kings and princes, and that he has arrived at the knowledge of the green, black, and golden dragon, known only to *magicians and hermetic philosophers*. It would be well if the quacks alone had a patent for this language.

III. THERE are some fine affected words that are used only at *court*, and some peculiar phrases that are sounding or gaudy, and belong only to *the theatre*; *these should not come into the lectures of instruction*: the language of poets has too much of metaphor in it, to lead mankind into clear and distinct ideas of things: the business of poetry is to strike the soul with a glaring light, and to urge the passions into a flame by splendid shews, by strong images, and a pathetic vehemence

mence of style; but it is another sort of speech, that is best suited to lead the calm enquirer into just conceptions of things.

IV. *THERE is a mean vulgar style, borrowed from the lower ranks of mankind, the basest characters and meanest affairs of life: this is also to be avoided; for it should be supposed, that persons of a liberal education, have not been bred up within the hearing of such language, and consequently they cannot understand it: besides, that it would create very offensive ideas, should we borrow even similies for illustration from the scullery, the dunghill, and the jakes.*

V. *A N obscure and mysterious manner of expression and cloudy language is to be avoided.* Some persons have been led by education, or by some foolish prejudices, into a dark and unintelligible way of thinking and speaking, and this continues with them all their lives, and clouds and confounds their ideas. Perhaps some of these may have been blest with a great and comprehensive genius, with sublime natural parts, and a torrent of ideas flowing in upon them; yet for want of clearness, in the manner of their conception and language, they sometimes drown their own subject of discourse, and overwhelm their argument in darkness and perplexity. Such preachers as have read much of the mystical divinity of the papists, and imitated their

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manner



manner of expression, have many times buried a fine understanding under the obscurity of such a style.

VI. *A long and tedious style is very improper for a teacher*, for this also lessens the perspicuity of it. Some learned writers are never satisfied, unless they fill up every sentence with a great number of ideas and sentiments; they swell their propositions to an enormous size by explications, exceptions and precautions, lest they should be mistaken, and crowd them all into the same period; they involve and darken their discourse by many a parenthesis, and prolong their sentences to a tiresome extent, beyond the reach of a common comprehension: such sort of writers or speakers may be rich in knowledge, but they are seldom fit to communicate it. He that would gain a happy talent for the instruction of others, must know how to disentangle and divide his thoughts, if too many of them are ready to crowd into one paragraph; and let him rather speak three sentences distinctly and perspicuously, which the hearer receives at once with his ears and his soul, than crowd all the thoughts into one sentence, which the hearer has forgotten before he can understand it.

BUT this leads me to the next thing I proposed, which was to mention some *methods*, whereby such a perspicuity of style may be obtained as is proper for instruction.

1. *ACCUSTOM* yourself to read those authors who think and write with great clearness and evidence, such as convey their ideas into your understanding, as fast as your eye or tongue can run over their sentences; this will imprint upon the mind an habit of imitation, we shall learn the style with which we are very conversant, and practise it with ease and success.

2. *GET* a distinct and comprehensive knowledge of the subject which you treat of; survey it on all sides, and make yourself perfect master of it: then you will have all the sentiments that relate to it in your view and under your command, and your tongue will very easily clothe those ideas with words which your mind has first made so familiar and easy to itself.

*Scribendirectè sapere est & principium & fons,  
Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.*  
HOR. de Arte Poet.

*Good teaching from good knowledge springs,  
Words will make haste to follow things.*

3. *BE* well skilled in the language which you speak; acquaint yourself with all the idioms and special phrases of it, which are necessary to convey the needful ideas on the subject of which you treat, in the most various and most easy manner to the under-

standing of the hearer: the variation of a phrase in several forms is of admirable use to instruct, it is like turning all sides of the subject to view; and if the learner happens not to take in the ideas in one form of speech, probably another may be successful for that end.

UPON this account I have always thought it an useful manner of instruction, which is used in some *Latin* schools, which they call *variation*. Take some plain sentence in the *English* tongue, and then turn it into many forms in *Latin*; as for instance, *a wolf let into the sheep-fold, will devour the sheep. If you let a wolf into the fold, the sheep will be devoured: the wolf will devour the sheep, if the sheep-fold be left open. If the fold be not left shut carefully, the wolf will devour the sheep: the sheep will be devoured by the wolf, if it find the way into the fold open. There is no defence of the sheep from the wolf, unless it be kept out of the fold. A slaughter will be made among the sheep, if the wolf can get into the fold.* Thus by turning the *active* voice of verbs into the *passive*, and the *nominative* case of nouns into the *accusative*, and altering the connection of short sentences by different adverbs or conjunctions, and by *ablative* cases with a preposition brought instead of the *nominative*, or by *participles* sometimes put instead of the *verbs*, the negation of and the contrary, instead

stead of the assertion of the thing first proposed, a great variety of forms of speech will be created, which shall express the same sense.

4. *ACQUIRE a variety of words, a copia verborum*; let your memory be rich in synonymous terms or words, expressing the same happy effect with the variation of the same thing: this will not only attain the phrases in the foregoing direction, but it will add a beauty also to your style, by securing you from an appearance of tautology, or repeating the same words too often, which sometimes may disgust the ear of the learner.

5. *LEARN the art of shortening your sentences*, by dividing a long complicated period into two or three small ones. When others connect and join two or three sentences in one by relative pronouns, as *which, whereof, wherein, whereto, &c.* and by parentheses frequently inserted; do you rather divide them into distinct periods, or at least if they must be united, let it be done rather by conjunctions and copulatives, that they may appear like distinct sentences, and give less confusion to the hearer or reader.

I know no method so effectual to learn what I mean, as to take now and then some page of an author, who is guilty of such a long involved parenthetical style, and translate it into plainer English, by dividing the



22 *Of convincing other Persons* PART II.

ideas or the sentences asunder, and multiplying the periods, till the language become smooth and easy, and intelligible at first reading.

6. *TALK frequently to young and ignorant persons, upon subjects which are new and unknown to them; and be diligent to enquire whether they understand you or no; this will put you upon changing your phrases and forms of speech in a variety, till you can hit their capacity, and convey your ideas into their understanding.*

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C H A P. III.

*Of convincing other Persons of any Truth; or delivering them from errors and mistakes.*

**W**HEN we are arrived at a just and rational establishment in an opinion, whether it relate to religion or common life, we are naturally desirous of bringing all the world into our sentiments; and this proceeds from the affectation and pride of superior influence upon the judgment of our fellow-creatures, much more  
fre-



frequently than it does from a sense of duty or love to truth : so vicious and corrupt is human nature. Yet there is such a thing to be found as an honest and sincere delight in propagating truth, arising from a dutiful regard to the honour of our Maker, and an hearty love to mankind. Now if we would be successful in our attempts to convince men of their errors, and to promote the truth, let us divest ourselves as far as possible of that pride and affectation, which I mentioned before, and seek to acquire that disinterested love to men and zeal for the truth, which will naturally lead us into the best methods to promote it. And here the following directions may be useful.

I. If you would convince a person of his mistake, “ *choose a proper place, a happy hour, and the fittest concurrent circumstances for this purpose.*” Do not unseasonably set upon him when he has engaged in the midst of other affairs, but when his soul is at liberty, and at leisure to hear and attend. Accost him not upon that subject, when his spirit is ruffled or discomposed with any occurrences of life, and especially when he has heated his passions in the defence of a contrary opinion ; but rather seize a golden opportunity, when some occurrences of life may cast a favourable aspect upon the truth of which you would convince him, or which may throw some dark and unhappy

colour or consequences upon that error from which you would fain deliver him. There are in life some *Mollissima tempora fundi*, some very agreeable moments of addressing a person, which if rightly managed, may render your attempts more successful, and his conviction easy and pleasant.

II. *MAKE it appear by your whole conduct to the person you would teach, that you mean him well, that your design is not to triumph over his opinion, nor to expose his ignorance, or his incapacity of defending what he asserts. Let him see that 'tis not your aim to advance your own character as a disputant, nor to set yourself up for an instructor to mankind; but that you love him, and seek his true interest: and not only assure him of this in words, when you are entering on an argument with him, but let the whole of your conduct to him at all times demonstrate your real friendship for him. Truth and argument come with particular force from the mouth of one whom we trust and love.*

III. *THE softest and gentlest address to the erroneous, is the best way to convince them of their mistake. Sometimes 'tis necessary to represent to your opponent, that he is not far off from the truth, and that you would fain draw him a little nearer to it; commend and establish whatever he says that is just and true, as our blessed Saviour treated the young scribe, when he answered well concerning the two great commandments;*  
“ Thou

“Thou art not far, says our Lord, from the kingdom of heaven,” *Mark* xii. 34. Imitate the mildness and conduct of the blessed *Jesus*.

COME as near to your opponent as you can in all your propositions, and yield to him as much as you dare, in a consistence with truth and justice.

'Tis a very great and fatal mistake in persons who attempt to convince or reconcile others to their party, when they make the difference appear as wide as possible: this is shocking to any person who is to be convinced, he will choose rather to keep and maintain his own opinions, if he cannot come into your's without renouncing and abandoning every thing that he believed before. Human nature must be flattered a little as well as reasoned with, that so the argument may be able to come at his understanding, which otherwise will be thrust off at a distance. If you charge a man with nonsense and absurdities, with heresy and self-contradiction, you take a very wrong step towards convincing him.

REMEMBER that error is not to be rooted out of the mind of man by reproaches and railings, by flashes of wit and biting jests, by loud exclamations or sharp ridicule: long declamations and triumph over our neighbour's mistake, will not prove the way to convince him; these are signs either  
of

of a bad cause, or of want of arguments or capacity for the defence of a good one.

IV. *SET therefore a constant watch over yourself, lest you grow warm in dispute before you are aware.* The passions never clear the understanding, but raise darkness, clouds and confusion in the soul: human nature is like water which has mud at the bottom of it, it may be clear while it is calm and undisturbed, and the ideas like pebbles appear bright at the bottom; but when once it is stirred and moved by passion, the mud rises uppermost, and spreads confusion and darkness over all the ideas; you cannot set things in so just and so clear a light before the eyes of your neighbour, while your own conceptions are clouded with heat and passion.

BESIDES, when your own spirits are a little disturbed, and your wrath is awakened, this naturally kindles the same fire in your correspondent, and prevents him from taking in your ideas, were they ever so clear; for his passions are engaged all on a sudden for the defence of his own mistakes, and they combat as fiercely as your's do, which perhaps may be awakened on the side of truth.

To provoke a person whom you would convince, not only rouses his anger, and sets it against your doctrine; but directs  
its



its resentment against your person, as well as against all your instructions and arguments. You must treat an opponent like a friend, if you would persuade him to learn any thing from you; and this is one great reason why there is so little success on either side between two disputants or controversial writers, because they are so ready to interest their passions in the subject of contest, and prevent the mutual light that might be given and received on either side: ambition, indignation, and a professed zeal, reign on both sides: victory is the point designed, while truth is pretended, and truth oftentimes perishes in the fray, or retires from the field of battle: the combatants end just where they began, the understandings hold fast the same opinions; perhaps with this disadvantage, that they are a little more obstinate, and rooted in them without fresh reason, and they generally come off with the loss of temper and charity.

V. *NEITHER attempt nor hope to convince a person of his mistake, by any penal methods or severe usage:* there is no light brought into the mind by all the fire and sword, and bloody persecutions that were ever introduced into the world. One would think that the princes, the priests, and the people, the learned and the unlearned, the great and the mean, should have all, by this time, seen the folly and madness of seeking



seeking to propagate the truth by the laws of cruelty : we compel a beast to the yoke by blows, because the ox and the ass have no understanding ; but intellectual powers are not to be fettered and compelled at this rate : men cannot believe what they will, nor change their religion and their sentiments as they please ; they may be made hypocrites by the forms of severity, and constrained to profess what they don't believe ; they may be forced to comply with external practices and ceremonies, contrary to their own consciences ; but this can never please God, nor profit men.

VI. IN order to convince another, you should always *make choice of those arguments that are best suited to his understanding and capacity, his genius and temper, his state, station, and circumstances.* If I were to persuade a plowman of the truth of any form of church-government, it should not be attempted by the use of the *Greek* and *Latin* fathers ; but from the word of God, the light of nature, and the common reason of things.

VII. *ARGUMENTS* should always be proposed in such a manner, as may lead the mind onward to perceive the truth in a clear and agreeable light, as well as to constrain the assent by the power of reasoning. Clear ideas in many cases, are as useful toward

con-

conviction, as a well-formed and unanswerable syllogism.

VIII. *ALLOW the person you desire to instruct a reasonable time to enter into the force of your argument.* When you have declared your own sentiments in the brightest manner of illustration, and enforced them with the most convincing arguments, you are not to suppose that your friends should immediately be convinced and receive the truth: habitude in a particular way of thinking, as well as in most other things, obtains the force of nature, and you can't expect to wean a man from his accustomed errors but by slow degrees, and by his own assistance; entreat him therefore not to judge on the sudden, nor determine against you at once, but that he would please to review your scheme, reflect upon your arguments with all the impartiality he is capable of, and take time to think these over again at large; at least that he would be disposed to hear you speak yet further on this subject, without pain or aversion.

ADDRESS him therefore in an obliging manner; and say, I am not so fond as to think I have placed the subject in such lights, as to throw you on a sudden into a new track of thinking, or to make you immediately lay aside your present opinions or designs; all that I hope is, that some hint or other which I have given, is capable

ble of being improved by you to your own conviction, or possibly it may lead you into such a train of reasoning, as in time to effect a change in your thoughts. Which hint leads me to add,

IX. *LABOUR as much as possible to make the person you would teach, his own instructor.* Human nature may be allured, by a secret pleasure and pride in its own reasoning, to seem to find out by itself the very thing that you would teach; and there are some persons that have so much of this natural bias towards self rooted in them, that they can never be convinced of a mistake by the plainest and strongest arguments to the contrary, though the demonstration glare in their faces; but they may be tempted by such gentle insinuations to follow a track of thought, which you propose, till they have wound themselves out of their own error, and led themselves hereby into your opinion; if you do but let it appear, that they are under their own guidance rather than your's. And perhaps there is nothing which shews more dexterity of address, than this secret influence over the minds of others, which they do not discern even while they follow it.

X. *IF you can gain the main point in question, be not very solicitous about the nicety with which it shall be expressed.* Mankind is so vain a thing, that 'tis not willing to  
derive

derive from another, and tho' it cannot have every thing from itself, yet it would seem at least to mingle something of its own with what it derives elsewhere: therefore when you have set your sentiment in the fullest light, and proved it in the most effectual manner, an opponent will bring in some frivolous and useless distinction on purpose to change the form of words in the question, and acknowledge that he receives your proposition in such a sense, and in such a manner of expression, tho' he cannot receive it in your terms and phrases. *Vanillus* will confess he is now convinced, that a man who behaves well in the state, ought not to be punished for his religion; but yet he will not consent to allow an universal toleration of all religions that don't injure the state, which is the proposition I had been proving. Well, let *Vanillus* therefore use his own language, I am glad he is convinced of the truth; he shall have leave to dress it in his own way.

To these directions I shall add two remarks in the conclusion of this chapter, which would not so properly fall under the preceding directions.

I. *Rem.* WHEN you have laboured to instruct a person in some controverted truth, and yet he retains some prejudice against it, so that he doth not yield to the convincing force of your arguments, you may sometimes



times have happy success in convincing him of that truth, by setting him to read a weak author, who writes against it: A young reader will find such pleasure in being able to answer the arguments of the opposer, that he will drop his former prejudices against the truth, and yield to the power and evidence of your reasons. I confess this looks like setting up one prejudice to overthrow another; but where prejudices cannot be fairly removed by dint of reason, the wisest and best of teachers will sometimes find it necessary to make a way for reason and truth to take place by this contrast of prejudices.

II. *Rem.* WHEN our design is to *convince a whole family, or community of persons* of any mistake, or to lead them into any truth, we may justly suppose there are *various* reigning prejudices among them; and therefore it is not safe to attempt, nor so easy to effect it, *by addressing the whole number at once*. Such a method has been often found to raise a sudden alarm, and has produced a violent opposition even to the most fair, pious, and useful proposal; so that he who made the motion, could never carry his point.

WE must therefore first make as sure as we can of the most intelligent and learned, at least the most leading persons amongst them, by addressing them apart prudently,  
and



and offering proper reasons, till they are convinced and engaged on the side of truth; and these may with more success apply themselves to others of the same community; yet the original proposer should not neglect to make a distinct application to all the rest, so far as circumstances admit.

WHERE a thing is to be determined by *a number of votes*, he should labour to secure a *good majority*, and then take care that the most proper persons should move and argue the matter in public, lest it be quashed in the very first proposal by some prejudice against the proposer.

So unhappily are our circumstances situated in this world, that if *truth* and *justice* and *goodness* could put on human forms, and descend from heaven to propose the most divine and useful doctrines, and bring with them the clearest evidence, and publish them at once to a multitude whose prejudices are engaged against them, the proposal would be vain and fruitless, and would neither convince nor persuade. So necessary is it to join *art and dexterity*, together with the *force of reason*, to convince mankind of truth, unless we came furnished with miracles or omnipotence to create a conviction\*.

C H A P.

\* The conduct of Christ and his apostles, (armed as they were with supernatural powers) in the gradual open-

## C H A P. IV.

*Of Authority, of the Abuse of it, and of its real and proper Use and Service.*

THE influence which other persons have upon our opinions is usually called *authority*. The power of it is so great and widely extensive, that there is scarcely any person in the world entirely free from the impression of it, even after their utmost watchfulness and care to avoid it. Our *parents* and *tutors*, yea our very *nurses* determine a multitude of our sentiments; our *friends*, our *neighbours*, the *custom of the country* where we dwell, and the *established opinions of mankind*, form our belief; the *great*, the *pious*, the *learned*, and the *ancient*, the *king*, the *priest*, and the *philosopher*, are characters of mighty efficacy to persuade us to receive what they dictate. These may be ranked under different *heads of prejudice*, but they are

nings of truth, against which the minds of their disciples were strongly prejudiced, may not only secure such an address from the imputation of dishonest craft, but may demonstrate the expediency, and in some cases the necessity, of attending to it.

all of a kindred nature, and may be reduced to this one spring or head of *authority*.

I HAVE treated of these particularly in *Logic*, Part IIId, Chap. IIIId, Sec. 4th. Yet a few other *remarks* occurring among my papers, I thought it not improper to let them find a place here.

CICERO was well acquainted with the unhappy influences of *authority*, and complains of it in his first book *De Naturâ Deorum*. “ In disputes and controversies  
 “ (says he) it is not so much the author;  
 “ or patrons of any opinion; as the weight  
 “ and force of argument, which should influence the mind. The authority of those  
 “ who teach, is a frequent hindrance to those  
 “ who learn, because they utterly neglect to  
 “ exercise their own judgment, taking for  
 “ granted whatsoever others whom they reverence have judged for them. I can by  
 “ no means approve, what we learn from  
 “ the *Pythagoreans*, that if any thing asserted in disputation was questioned, they  
 “ were wont to answer, *Ipsè dixit*, i. e. *He himself said so*, meaning *Pythagoras*. So  
 “ far did prejudice prevail, that authority  
 “ without reason was sufficient to determine  
 “ disputes and to establish truth.”

ALL human authority, though it be ever so ancient, though it hath had universal sovereignty, and sway'd all the learned and the



vulgar world for some thousands of years, yet has no certain and undoubted claim to truth : nor is it any violation of good manners, to enter a *caveat* with due decency against its pretended dominion. What is there among all the sciences that has been longer established and more universally received ever since the days of *Aristotle*, and perhaps for ages before he lived, than this, that *all heavy bodies whatsoever tend toward the centre of the earth*? But Sir *Isaac Newton* has found that those bulky and weighty bodies, the *earth* and all the *planets*, *tend toward the centre of the sun*, whereby, the authority of near three thousand years or more is not only called in question, but actually refuted and renounced.

AGAIN, Was ever any thing more universally agreed among the nation of the poets and critics, than that *Homer* and *Virgil* are inimitable writers of heroic poems? And whoever presumed to attack their writings or their reputation, was either condemned for his malice or derided for his folly. These ancient authors have been supposed to derive peculiar advantages to aggrandize their verses from the *heathen theology*, and that variety of appearances in which they could represent their gods, and mingle them with the affairs of men : yet within these few years Sir *Richard Blackmore*, (whose *prefaces* are universally esteem-

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ed superior in their kind to any of his *poems*) has ventured to pronounce some noble truths in that excellent preface to his poem called *Alfred*, and has bravely demonstrated there, beyond all possible exception, that both *Virgil* and *Homer* are often guilty of very gross blunders, indecencies and shameful improprieties; and that they were so far from deriving any advantage from the rabble of *heathen gods*, that their theology almost unavoidably exposed them to many of those blunders; and that it is not possible upon the foot of *gentile superstition*, to write a perfect *epic poem*: whereas the sacred religion of the Bible, would furnish a poem with much more just and glorious scenes and a nobler machinery.

MR. DENNIS also had made it appear in his *essays* some years before, that there were no images so sublime in the brightest of the *heathen* writers, as those with which we are furnished in the poetic parts of the holy scripture: and *Rapin*, the *French* critic, dared to profess the same sentiments, notwithstanding the world of *poets* and *critics* had so universally and unanimously exalted the *heathen* writers to the sovereignty for so many ages. If we would find out the truth in many cases, we must dare to deviate from the long-beaten track, and venture to think with a just and unbiassed liberty.



THO' it be necessary to guard against the evil influences of *authority*, and the prejudices derived thence, because it has introduced thousands of errors and mischiefs into the world, yet there are three eminent and remarkable cases wherein *authority*, or the sentiments of other persons, must or will determine the judgments and practice of mankind.

I. *PARENTS* are appointed to judge for their children in their younger years, and to instruct them what they should believe, and what they should practise in the civil and religious life: This is a *dictate of nature*, and doubtless it would have been so in a state of innocence. It is impossible that children should be capable of judging for themselves, before their minds are furnished with a competent number of ideas, before they are acquainted with any principles and rules of just judgment, and before their reason is grown up to any degrees of maturity and proper exercises upon such subjects.

I WILL not say, that a child ought to believe *nonsense* and *impossibility*, because his father bids him; for so far as the impossibility appears, he cannot believe it: nor will I say, he ought to assent to all the false opinions of his parents, or to practise idolatry and murder, or mischief, at their command: yet a child knows not any better way to find  
out

out what he should believe and what he should practise, before he can possibly judge for himself, than to run to his parents, and receive their sentiments and their directions.

You will say, This is hard indeed, that the child of a *heathen idolater*, or a cruel *cannibal*, is laid under a sort of necessity by nature of sinning against the light of nature. I grant it is hard indeed, but it is only owing to our original fall and apostasy: the law of nature continues as it was in innocence, namely, that a parent should judge for his child; but, if the parent judges ill, the child is greatly exposed by it, thro' that universal disorder that is brought into the world by the sin of *Adam*, our common father: and from the equity and goodness of God we may reasonably infer, that the great judge of all will do right; he will balance the ignorance and incapacity of the child, with the criminal nature of the offence in those puerile instances, and will not punish beyond just demerit.

*BESIDES*, what could God, as a creator, do better for children in their minority, than to commit them to the care and instruction of parents: none are supposed to be so much concerned for the happiness of children as their parents are; therefore it is the safest step to happiness, according to the original law of creation, to follow their

directions, their parents reason acting for them, before they have reason of their own in proper exercise; nor indeed is there any better *general rule* in our fallen state, by which children are capable of being governed, though in many particular cases it may lead them far astray from virtue and happiness.

IF children by providence be cast under some happier instructions, contrary to their parents erroneous opinions, I cannot say it is the duty of such children to follow error, when they discern it to be error, because their father believes it; what I said before, is to be interpreted only of those that are under the immediate care and education of their parents, and not yet arrived at years capable of examination; I know not how these can be freed from receiving the dictates of parental authority in their youngest years, except by immediate or divine inspiration.

It is hard to say, at what exact time of life the child is exempted from the sovereignty of parental dictates. Perhaps it is much juster to suppose, that this sovereignty diminishes by degrees as the child grows in understanding and capacity, and is more and more capable of exerting his own intellectual powers, than to limit this matter by months and years.

WHEN childhood and youth are so far expired, that the reasoning faculties are  
grown



grown up to any just measure of maturity, it is certain that persons ought to begin to enquire into the reasons of their own faith and practice in all the affairs of life and religion: but as reason does not arrive at this power and self-sufficiency in any single moment of time, so there is no single moment when a child should at once cast off all its former beliefs and practices; but by degrees and in slow succession he should examine them, as opportunity and advantages offer; and either confirm, or doubt of, or change them, according to the leadings of conscience and reason, with all its best advantages of information.

WHEN we are arrived at manly age, there is no person on earth, no set or society of men whatsoever, that have power and authority given them by God, the creator and governor of the world, absolutely to dictate to others their opinions or practices in the moral and religious life. God has given every man reason to judge for himself, in higher or in lower degrees. Where less is given, less will be required. But we are justly chargeable with criminal sloth, and misimprovement of the talents with which our creator has intrusted us, if we take all things for granted which others assert, and believe and practise all things which they dictate, without due examination.

II. ANO-

II. ANOTHER case wherein *authority* must govern our assent, is in many *matters of fact*. Here we may and ought to be determined by the declarations or narratives of other men; tho' I must confess, this is usually called *testimony* rather than *authority*. It is upon this foot, that every son or daughter among mankind are required to believe that such and such persons are their parents, for they can never be informed of it but by the dictates of others. It is by *testimony* that we are to believe the laws of our country, and to pay all proper deference to the prince, and to magistrates, in subordinate degrees of authority, though we did not actually see them chosen, crowned, or invested with their title and character. It is by *testimony* that we are necessitated to believe there is such a city as *Canterbury* or *York*, though perhaps we have never been at either; that there are such persons as papists at *Paris* and *Rome*, and that there are many sottish and cruel tenets in their religion. It is by *testimony* we believe that christianity and the books of the Bible, have been faithfully delivered down to us through many generations; that there was such a person as *Christ* our Saviour, that he wrought miracles, and died on the cross, that he rose again and ascended to heaven.

THE *authority* or *testimony* of men, if they are wise and honest, if they had full opportunities



tunities and capacities of knowing the truth, and are free from all suspicion of deceit in relating it, ought to sway our assent; especially when multitudes concur in the same testimony, and when there are many other attending circumstances that raise the proposition which they dictate to the degree of *moral certainty*.

BUT in this very case, even in matters of fact and affairs of history, we should not too easily give in to all the dictates of tradition, and the pompous pretences to the testimony of men, till we have fairly examined the several things which are necessary to make up a credible testimony, and to lay a just foundation for our belief. There are and have been so many falsehoods imposed upon mankind, with specious pretences of eye and ear-witnesses, that should make us wisely cautious and justly suspicious of reports, where the concurrent signs of truth do not fairly appear, and especially where the matter is of considerable importance. And the less probable the fact testified is in itself, the greater evidence may we justly demand of the veracity of that testimony on which it claims to be admitted.

III. THE last case wherein *authority* must govern us is, when we are called to believe what persons under inspiration have dictated to us. This is not properly the *authority* of men, but of God himself; and  
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we are obliged to believe what that authority asserts, though our reason at present may not be able any other way to discover the certainty or evidence of the proposition: It is enough if our faculty of reason, in its best exercise, can discover the divine authority which has proposed it. Where doctrines of divine revelation are plainly published, together with sufficient proofs of their revelation, all mankind are bound to receive them, tho' they cannot perfectly understand them; for we know that God is true, and cannot dictate falsehood.

BUT if these pretended dictates are directly contrary to the natural faculties of understanding and reason which God has given us, we may be well assured these dictates were never revealed to us by God himself. When persons are really influenced by authority to believe pretended mysteries, in plain opposition to reason, and yet pretend reason for what they believe, this is but a vain amusement.

THERE is no reason whatsoever that can prove or establish any authority so firmly, as to give it power to dictate in matters of belief, *what is contrary to all the dictates of our reasonable nature.* God himself has never given us any such revelations; and I think it may be said, with reverence, he neither can nor will do it, unless he changes our faculties from what they are at present. To tell us

we must believe a proposition which is plainly contrary to reason, is to tell us that we must believe two ideas are joined, while (if we attend to reason) we plainly see and know them to be disjoined.

WHAT could ever have established the nonsense of *transubstantiation* in the world, if men had been fixed in this great truth, that *God gives no revelation contradictory to our own reason?* things may be *above our reason*, that is, reason may have but obscure ideas of them, or reason may not see the connexion of these ideas, or may not know at present the certain and exact manner of reconciling such propositions either with one another, or with other rational truths, as I have explained in some of my logical papers: but when they stand directly and plainly *against all sense and reason*, as *transubstantiation* does, no divine authority can be pretended to enforce their belief, and human authority is impudent to pretend to it. Yet this human authority, in the *popish* countries, has prevailed over millions of souls, because they have abandoned their reason, they have given up the glory of human nature to be trampled upon by knaves, and so reduced themselves to the condition of brutes.

It is by this amusement of authority (says a certain author) that the *horse* is taught to obey the words of command, a  
dog



*dog* to fetch and carry, and a man to believe inconsistencies and impossibilities. Whips and dungeons, fire and the gibbet; and the solemn terrors of eternal misery after this life, will persuade weak minds to believe against their senses, and in direct contradiction to all their reasoning powers. A *parrot* is taught to tell lies with much more ease and more gentle usage; but none of all these creatures would serve their masters at the expence of their liberty, had they but knowledge and the just use of reason.

I HAVE mentioned three cases, wherein mankind must or will be determined in their sentiments by authority; that is, the *case of children* in their minority, in regard of the *commands of their parents*; the case of all men with regard to universal, complete and *sufficient testimony of matter of fact*; and the case of every person, with regard to the *authority of divine revelation*, and of men divinely inspired; and under each of these I have given such *limitations and cautions* as were necessary.

I PROCEED now to mention some other cases, wherein we ought to pay a great deference to the authority and sentiments of others, though we are not absolutely concluded and determined by their opinions.

1. WHEN we begin to pass out of our minority, and to judge for ourselves in matters



ters of the civil and religious life, we ought to pay very great deference to the sentiments of our *parents*, who in the time of our minority were our natural guides and directors in these matters. So in matters of science, an ignorant and unexperienced youth should pay great deference to the opinions of his *instructors*: and though he may justly suspend his judgment in matters which his tutors dictate, till he perceive sufficient evidence for them; yet neither parents nor tutors should be directly opposed without great and most evident reasons, such as constrain the understanding or conscience of those concerned.

2. PERSONS of years and long experience, of human affairs, when they give advice in matters of prudence or civil conduct, ought to have a considerable deference paid to their authority by those that are young and have not seen the world, for it is most probable that the elder persons are in the right.

3. IN the affairs of practical godliness, there should be much deference given to persons of long standing in virtue and piety. I confess in the particular forms and ceremonies of religion, there may be as much bigotry and superstition amongst the old as the young; but in questions of inward religion and pure devotion, or virtue, a man who has been long engaged in the sincere practice of those things, is justly presumed

to know more than a youth with all his ungoverned passions, appetites and prejudices about him.

4. MEN in their several professions and arts, in which they have been educated, and in which they have employed themselves all their days, must be supposed to have greater knowledge and skill than others; and therefore there is due respect to be paid to their judgment in those matters.

5. IN matters of fact, where there is not sufficient testimony to constrain our assent, yet there ought to be due deference paid to the narratives of persons wise and sober, according to the degrees of their honesty, skill, and opportunity to acquaint themselves therewith.

I CONFESS in many of these cases, where the proposition is a mere matter of speculation, and doth not necessarily draw practice along with it, we may delay our assent till better evidence appear; but where the matter is of a practical nature, and requires us to act one way or another, we ought to pay much deference to authority or testimony, and follow such probabilities where we have no certainty; for this is the best light we have, and surely it is better to follow such sort of guidance, where we can have no better, than to wander and fluctuate in absolute uncertainty. It is not reasonable to put out our candle, and sit still in the dark,

dark, because we have not the light of sun-beams.

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C H A P. V.

*Of treating and managing the Prejudices of Men \*.*

**I**F we had nothing but the *reason* of men to deal with, and that *reason* were pure and uncorrupted, it would then be a matter of no great skill or labour to convince another person of common mistakes, or to persuade him to assent to plain and obvious truths. But alas! mankind stand wrapt round in *errors*, and intrenched in *prejudices*; and every one of their opinions is supported and guarded by something else beside *reason*. A young bright genius, who has furnished himself with a variety of truths and strong arguments, but is yet unacquainted

\* For the nature and causes of prejudices, and for the preventing or curing them in ourselves; see the Doctor's *System of Logic*, Part II. Chap. III. *Of the springs of false judgment, or the doctrine of prejudices.*



with the world, goes forth from the schools like a *knight errant*, presuming bravely to vanquish the follies of men, and to scatter light and truth through all his acquaintance. But he meets with huge giants and enchanted castles, strong prepossessions of mind, habits, customs, educations, authority, interest, together with all the various passions of men, armed and obstinate to defend their old opinions; and he is strangely disappointed in his generous attempts. He finds now that he must not trust merely to the sharpness of his steel, and to the strength of his arm, but he must manage the weapons of his reason with much dexterity and artifice, with skill and address, or he shall never be able to subdue errors and to convince mankind.

WHERE *prejudices* are strong, there are these several *methods* to be practised in order to convince persons of their mistakes, and make a way for truth to enter into their minds.

I. *BY avoiding the power and influence of the prejudice, without any direct attack upon it*: and this is done, by choosing all the slow, soft and distant methods of proposing your own sentiments, and your arguments for them, and by degrees leading the person step by step into those truths which his prejudices would not bear if they were proposed all at once.

PERHAPS



PERHAPS your neighbour is under the influence of *superstition and bigotry in the simplicity of his soul*; you must not immediately run upon him with violence, and shew him the absurdity or folly of his own opinions, tho' you might be able to set them in a glaring light: but you must rather begin at a distance, and establish his assent to some familiar and easy propositions, which have a tendency to refute his mistakes, and to confirm the truth; and then silently observe what impression this makes upon him, and proceed by slow degrees as he is able to bear; and you must carry on the work, perhaps at distant seasons of conversation. The tender or diseased eye cannot bear a deluge of light at once.

THEREFORE we are not to consider our arguments merely *according to our own notions of their force*, and from thence expect the immediate conviction of others; but we should regard *how they are likely to be received by the persons we converse with*; and thus manage our reasoning, as the nurse gives a child drink by slow degrees, lest the infant should be choked or return it all back again, if poured in too hastily. If your wine be ever so good, and you are ever so liberal in bestowing it on your neighbour, yet if his bottle into which you attempt to pour it with freedom has a narrow mouth, you

will sooner overset the bottle, than fill it with wine.

*OVER-HASTINESS* and vehemence in arguing is oftentimes the effect of pride; it blunts the poignancy of the argument, breaks its force, and disappoints the end. If you were to convince a person of the falshood of the *doctrine of transubstantiation*, and you take up the consecrated bread before him and say, “You may see, and  
“ taste, and feel, *this is nothing but bread*;  
“ therefore whilst you assert that God com-  
“ mands you to believe *it is not bread*, you  
“ most wickedly accuse God of command-  
“ ing you to tell a lye.” This sort of language would only raise the indignation of the person against you, instead of making any impressions upon him. He will not so much as think at all on the argument you have brought, but he rages at you as a *profane wretch*, setting up your own sense and reason above sacred authority; so that though what you affirm is a truth of great evidence, yet you lose the benefit of your whole argument by an ill management, and the unseasonable use of it.

II. We may expressly allow and indulge those prejudices for a season, which seem to stand against the truth, and endeavour to introduce the truth by degrees while those prejudices are expressly allowed, till by degrees the advancing truth may of itself wear out

*out the prejudice.* Thus God himself dealt with his own people the *Jews* after the resurrection of *Christ*; for though from the following days of *Pentecost* when the gospel was proclaimed and confirmed at *Jerusalem*, the *Jewish* ceremonies began to be void and ineffectual for any divine purpose, yet the *Jews* who received Christ the Messiah were permitted to circumcise their children, and to practise many *Levitical* forms, till that constitution which then *waxed old* should in time *vanish away*.

WHERE the prejudices of mankind cannot be conquered at once, but they will rise up in arms against the evidence of truth, we must make some allowances, and yield to them for the present, as far as we can safely do it without real injury to truth: and if we would have any success in our endeavours to convince the world, we must practise this complaisance for the benefit of mankind.

TAKE a student who has deeply imbibed the principles of the *Peripatetics*, and imagines certain immaterial beings, called *substantial forms*, to inhabit every herb, flower, mineral, metal, fire, water, &c. and to be the spring of all its properties and operations; or take a *Platonist* who believes an *anima mundi*, an universal soul of the world to pervade all bodies, to act in and by them according to their nature, and indeed to give them



their nature and their special powers; perhaps it may be very hard to convince these persons by arguments, and constrain them to yield up these fancies. Well then, let the one believe his *universal soul*, and the other go on with his notion of *substantial forms*, and at the same time teach them how by certain original laws of motion, and the various sizes, shapes, and situations of the parts of matter, allowing a continued divine concurrence in and with all, the several appearances in nature may be solved, and the variety of effects produced, according to the corpuscular philosophy, improved by *Descartes*, *Mr. Boyle*, and *Sir Isaac Newton*; and when they have attained a degree of skill in this science, they will see these airy notions of theirs, these imaginary powers, to be so useless and unnecessary, that they will drop them of their own accord: the *Peripatetic forms* will vanish from the mind like a dream, and the *Platonic soul of the world* will expire.

OR suppose a young philosopher under a powerful persuasion, that there is *nothing but what has three dimensions, length, breadth, and thickness*, and consequently that *every finite being has a figure or shape*, (for shape is but the term and boundary of dimension;) suppose this person, through the long prejudices of sense and imagination, cannot be easily brought to conceive of a *spirit*, or  
a *think-*



a *thinking being* without *shape* and *dimensions*; let him then continue to conceive a *spirit with dimensions*; but be sure in all his conceptions to retain the idea of *cogitation* or a *power of thinking*, and thus proceed to philosophize upon the subject. Perhaps in a little time he will find that *length*, *breadth* and *shape*, have no share in any of the actions of a spirit; and that he can manifest all the properties and relations of such a being, with all its operations of sensation, volition, &c. to be as well performed without the use of this supposed *shape* or these *dimensions*; and that all these operations and these attributes may be ascribed to a *spirit*, considered merely as a *power of thinking*. And when he further conceives that *God*, the infinite spirit, is an *almighty, self-existing, thinking power, without shape and dimensions of length, breadth and depth*, he may then suppose the human spirit may be an inferior *self-subsisting power of thought*; and he may be inclined to drop the ideas of *dimension and figure* by degrees, when he sees and is convinced they do nothing towards *thinking*, nor are they necessary to assist or explain the operations or properties of a spirit.

I MAY give another instance of the same practice, where there is a prejudicate fondness of particular words and phrases. Suppose a man is educated in an *unhappy form*

*of speech*, whereby he explains some *great doctrine of the gospel*, and by the means of this phrase he has imbibed a very false idea of that doctrine: yet he is so bigotted to his form of words, that he imagines if those words are omitted the doctrine is lost. Now, if I cannot possibly persuade him to part with his improper terms, I will indulge them a little, and try to explain them in a scriptural sense, rather than let him go on in his mistaken ideas.

CREDONIUS believes that *Christ descended into hell*: I think the word *hell*, as now commonly understood, is very improper here; but since the bulk of christians, and Credonius among them, will by no means part with the word out of their *English* creed, I will explain the word *hell* to signify the *state of the dead*, or the *separate state of souls*; and thus lead my friend into more just ideas of the truth, namely, that the soul of Christ existed three days in the state of separation from his body, or was in the invisible world, which might be originally called *hell* in *English*, as well as *hades* in *Greek*.

ANILLA has been bred a *papist* all her days, and though she does not know much of religion, yet she resolves never to part from the *Roman catholic faith*, and is obstinately bent against a change. Now I cannot think it unlawful to teach her

her the true christian, that is, the *protestant religion*, out of the *epistle to the Romans*, and shew her that the same doctrine is contained in the *catholic epistles of St. Peter, James, and Jude*; and thus let her live and die a good christian, in the *belief* of the religion I teach her out of the New Testament, while she imagines she is a *Roman catholic* still, because she finds the doctrine she is taught in the *catholic epistles* and in that to the *Romans*.

I GRANT it is most proper there should be different words (as far as possible) applied to different ideas; and this rule should never be dispensed with, if we had to do only with the *reason of mankind*; but their various *prejudices* and *zeal for some party-phrases*, sometimes make it necessary that we should lead them into truth under the covert of their own beloved forms of speech, rather than permit them to live and die obstinate and unconvincible in any dangerous mistake: whereas an attempt to deprive them of their old established words, would raise such a tumult within them, as to render their conviction hopeless.

III. SOMETIMES we may *make use of the very prejudices under which a person labours, in order to convince him of some particular truth, and argue with him upon his own professed principles* as though they were true. This is called, *argumentum ad hominem*,



*minem*, and is another way of dealing with the prejudices of men.

SUPPOSE a *Jew* lies sick of a fever, and is forbidden flesh by his physician; but hearing that rabbits were provided for the dinner of the family, desired earnestly to eat of them; and suppose he became impatient because his physician did not permit him, and he insisted upon it, that it could do him no hurt: surely rather than let him persist in that fancy and that desire, to the danger of his life, I would tell him that *these animals were strangled*, which sort of food was forbidden by the *Jewish law*, though I myself may believe that law is now abolished.

IN the same manner was *Tenerilla* persuaded to let *Damon* her husband prosecute a thief, who broke open their house on a *Sunday*. At first she abhorred the thoughts of it, and refused it utterly, because if the thief were condemned, according to the *English law*, he must be hanged; whereas (said she) the law of God in the writings of *Moses*, does not appoint death to be the punishment of such criminals, but tells us, that *a thief shall be sold for his theft*, *Exod. xxii. 3*. But when *Damon* could no other ways convince her that the thief ought to be prosecuted, he put her in mind that the theft was committed on a *Sunday* morning; now the same  
law



law of *Moses* requires, that the *sabbath-breaker shall surely be put to death*, *Exod.* xxxi. 15. *Num.* xv. 35. This argument prevailed with *Tenerilla*, and she consented to the prosecution.

*ENCRAATES* used the same means of conviction when he saw a *Mahometan* drink wine to excess, and heard him maintain the lawfulness and pleasure of drunkenness: *Encrates* reminded him, that his own prophet *Mahomet* had utterly forbidden all wine to his followers; and the good man restrained his vicious appetite by his superstition, when he could no otherwise convince him that *drunkenness was unlawful*, nor withhold him from excess.

WHERE we find any person obstinately persisting in a mistake in opposition to all reason, especially if the mistake be very injurious or pernicious, and we know this person will hearken to the sentiment or authority of some favourite name, it is needful sometimes to urge the *opinion and authority* of that favourite person, since that is likely to be regarded much more than *reason*. I confess I am almost ashamed to speak of using any *influence of authority*, while I would teach the *art of reasoning*. But in some cases it is better that poor, silly, perverse, obstinate creatures should be persuaded to judge and act right, by a veneration for the sense of others, than to  
be

be left to wander in pernicious errors, and continue deaf to all argument and blind to all evidence. They are but children of a larger size; and since they persist all their lives in their minority, and reject all true reasoning, surely we may try to persuade them to practise what is for their own interest by such childish reasons as they will hearken to: we may overawe them from pursuing their own ruin by the terrors of a solemn shadow, or allure them by a sugar-plum to their own happiness.

BUT after all, we must conclude, that wheresoever it can be done, it is best to *remove and root out those prejudices* which obstruct the entrance of truth into the mind, rather than to palliate, humour, or indulge them; and sometimes this must necessarily be done, before you can make a person part with some beloved error, and lead him into better sentiments.

SUPPOSE you would convince a *gamester* that *gaming is not a lawful calling, or business of life, to maintain one's self by it*, and you make use of this argument, namely, “That which doth not admit us to ask the blessing of God that we may get gain by it, cannot be a lawful employment; but we cannot ask the blessing of God on gaming, therefore, &c.” The *minor* is proved thus: “We cannot pray that our neighbour may lose; this is contrary to  
“ the

“ the rule of seeking our neighbour’s well-  
 “ fare, and loving him as ourselves ; this is  
 “ wishing mischief to our neighbour. But  
 “ in gaming, we can gain but just so much  
 “ as our neighbour loses : therefore in  
 “ gaming, we cannot pray for the blessing  
 “ of God that we may gain by it.”

PERHAPS the *gamester* shrugs and winces, turns and twists the argument every way, but he cannot fairly answer it ; yet he will patch up an answer to satisfy himself, and will never yield to the conviction, because he feels so much of the sweet influence of *gaming*, either towards the gratification of his avarice, or the support of his expences. Thus he is under a strong prejudice in favour of it, and is not easily convinced.

YOUR first work therefore, must be to lead him by degrees to separate the thoughts of his *own interest* from the argument, and shew him that our own temporal interests, our livelihood, or our loss, hath nothing to do to determine this point in opposition to the *plain reason* of things and that he ought to put these considerations quite out of the question, if he would be honest and sincere in his search after truth or duty : and that he must be contented to hearken to the voice of reason and truth, even though it should run counter to his secular interest. When this is done, then an argument may  
 carry



carry some weight or force with it toward his conviction.

IN like manner, if the question were whether *Matrissa* ought to expose herself and her other children to poverty and misery, in order to support the extravagancies of a favourite son? Perhaps the mother can hear no argument against it; she feels no conviction in the most cogent reasonings, so close do her fond prejudices stick to her heart. The first business here is to remove this prejudice. Ask her therefore, whether it is not a parent's duty to love all her children, so as to provide for their welfare? Whether duty to God and her family ought not to regulate her love to a favourite? Whether her neighbour *Floris* did well in dressing up her daughters with expensive gaudery, and neglecting the education of her son till she saw his ruin? Perhaps by this method she might be brought to see, that *particular fondness* for one child, should have no weight or force in determining the judgment in opposition to plain duty: and she may then give herself up to conviction in her own case, and to the evidence of truth, and thus correct her mistaken practice.

SUPPOSE you would convert *Rominda* from popery, and you set all the absurdities, errors, and superstitions of that church before her in the most glaring evidence; she



she holds them fast still, and cannot part with them, for she hath a most sacred reverence for the faith and the church of her ancestors, and cannot imagine that they were in the wrong. The first labour must be therefore to convince her, that our ancestors were fallible creatures; that we may part with their faith without any dishonour done to them; that all persons must choose their religion for themselves; that we must answer for ourselves in the great day of judgment, and not we for our parents, nor they for us; that *christianity* itself had never been received by her ancestors in this nation, if they had persisted always in the religion of their parents, for they were all *heathens*. And when she has by these methods of reasoning been persuaded that she is not bound always to cleave to the religion of her parents, she may then receive an easier conviction of the errors of *Rome* \*.

## C H A P.

\* But perhaps of all these different methods of curing prejudices, none can be practised with greater pleasure to a wife and good man, or with greater success, where success is most desirable, than attempting to turn the attention of well-meaning people from some point in which prejudice prevails, to some other of greater importance, and fixing their thoughts and heart on some great truth which

## C H A P. VI.

*Of INSTRUCTION by PREACHING.*

## S E C T. I.

*Wisdom better than Learning in the Pulpit.*

**T**YRO is a young preacher just come from the schools of logic and divinity, and advanced to the pulpit; he was counted a smart youngster in the academy for analysing a proposition, and is full, even to the brim, with the terms of his art and learning. When he has read his text, after a short flourish of introduction, he tells you, in how many senses the chief word is taken, first among *Greek beathen* writers, and then in the New Testament;

which they allow, and which leads unto consequences contrary to some other notion which they espouse and retain. By this means they may be led to forget their errors, while attentive to opposite truth; and in proportion to the degree in which their minds open, and their tempers grow more generous and virtuous, may be induced to resign it. And surely nothing can give a benevolent mind more satisfaction, than to improve his neighbour in knowledge, and in goodness at the same time.

he cites all the chapters and the verses exactly, and endeavours to make you understand many a text before he lets you know fully what he means by his own. He finds these things at large in the critics, which he has consulted, where this sort of work is necessary and beautiful, and therefore he imagines it will become his sermon well. Then he informs you very learnedly, of the various false expositions which have been given by divines and commentators on this part of scripture, and it may be the reasons of each of them too; and he refutes them with much zeal and contempt. Having thus cleared his way, he fixes upon the exposition which his judgment best approves, and dwells, generally five or ten minutes upon the arguments to confirm it; and this he does not only in texts of darkness and difficulty, but even when scarcely a child could doubt of his meaning.

THIS *grammatical* exercise being performed, he applies himself to his *logic*; the text is divided and subdivided into many little pieces; he points you precisely to the *subject* and the *predicate*, brings you acquainted with the *agent* and the *object*, shows you all the *properties* and the *accidents* that attend it, and would fain make you understand the *matter* and the *form* of it, as well as he does himself. When he has thus done, two thirds of the hour is

F spent,



spent, and his hearers are quite tired; then he begins to draw near to his doctrine, or grand theme of discourse; and having told the audience, with great formality and exactness, what it is, and in what method he shall manage it, he names you one or two particulars under the first general head; and by this time finds it necessary to add, “ He intended indeed to have  
 “ been larger in the illustration of his sub-  
 “ ject, and he should have given you some  
 “ reasons for the doctrine, but he is for-  
 “ ry that he is prevented; and then he  
 “ designed also, to have brought it down to  
 “ the conscience of every man by a warm  
 “ address; but his time being gone, he  
 “ must break off.” He hurries over a hint or two, which should have been wrought up into exhortation or instruction, but all in great haste, and thus concludes his work. The *obstinate* and the *careless* sinners go away unawakened, unconvinced; and the *mourning* soul departs un comforted: the *unbeliever* is not led to faith in the *gospel*, nor the *immoral* wretch to hate or forsake his iniquities: the *hypocrite* and the *man of sincerity* are both unedified, because the preacher had not time. In short, he has finished his work, and he has done nothing.

WHEN I hear this man preach, it brings to my remembrance the account which I have heard concerning the *Czar of Muscovy*,  
 the



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the first time that his army besieged a town in *Livonia*: he was then just come from his travels in *Great-Britain*, where he and his ministers of state had learned the *mathe-matics* of an old acquaintance of mine: the *Czar* took great care to begin the siege in form; he drew all his lines of circumvallation and contravallation according to the rules of art; but he was so tedious and so exact in these mathematical performances, that the season was spent, he was forced to break up the siege, and retire without any execution done upon the town.

*ERGATES* is another sort of preacher, a *workman that need not be ashamed*: he had in his younger days but few of these learned vanities, and age and experience have now worn them all off: he preaches like a man *who watches for our souls, as one that must give an account*; he passes over lesser matters with speed, and pursues his great design, namely, *to save himself and them that hear him*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 16. And by following this advice of *St. Paul*, he happily complies with that great and natural rule of *Horace*, always to make haste towards the most valuable end:

*Semper ad eventum festinat.*——

He never affects to chuse a very obscure

text, lest he should waste too much of the hour in explaining the literal sense of it: he reserves all those obscurities, till they come in course at his seasons of public exposition; for it is his opinion, that preaching the gospel for the salvation of men, carries in it a little different idea from a learned and critical exposition of the difficult texts of scripture.

HE knows well how to use his *logic* in his composures; but he calls no part of the words by their *logical* name, if there be any *vulgar* name that answers it: reading and meditation have furnished him with extensive views of his subject, and his own good sense hath taught him to give sufficient reasons for every thing he asserts; but he never uses one of them till a proof is needful. He is acquainted with the mistaken glosses of expositors, but he thinks it needless to acquaint his hearers with them, unless there be evident danger that they might run into the same mistake. He understands well what his subject is not, as well as what it is; but when he would explain it to you, he never says, *first, negatively*, unless some remarkable error is at hand, and which his hearers may easily fall into for want of such a caution.

THUS in five or ten minutes at the most, he makes his way plain to the proposition or theme on which he designs to discourse;  
and

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and being so wise as to know well what to say and what to leave out, he proportions every part of his work to his time; he enlarges a little upon the subject, by way of illustration, till the truth becomes evident and intelligible to the weakest of his hearers; then he confirms the point with a few convincing arguments, where the matter requires it, and makes haste to turn the doctrine into use and improvement. Thus the *ignorant* are instructed, and the *growing christians* are established and improved: the *stupid sinner* is loudly awakened, and the *mourning* soul receives consolation: the *unbeliever* is led to trust in *Christ* and his gospel, and the *impenitent* and *immoral* are convinced and softened, are melted and reformed. The inward voice of the holy Spirit joins with the voice of the minister; the *good man* and the *hypocrite* have their proper portions assigned them, and the work of the Lord prospers in his hand.

THIS is the usual course and manner of his ministry. This method being natural, plain and easy, he casts many of his discourses into this form; but he is no slave to forms and methods of any kind: he makes the nature of his subject, and the necessity of his hearers, the great rule to direct him what method he shall choose in every sermon, that he may the better enlighten, convince, and persuade. *Ergates*

well knows, that where the subject itself is entirely practical, he has no need of the formality of long *uses* and *exhortations*: he knows that practice is the chief design of doctrine; therefore he bestows most of his labour upon this part of his office, and intermingles much of the pathetic under every particular: yet he wisely observes the special dangers of his flock, and the errors of the time he lives in; and now and then (though very seldom) he thinks it necessary to spend almost a whole discourse in mere doctrinal articles. Upon such an occasion, he thinks it proper to take up a little larger part of his hour in explaining and confirming the sense of his text, and brings it down to the understanding of a child.

At another time, perhaps, he particularly designs to entertain the few learned and polite among his auditors; and that with this view, that he may ingratiate his discourses with their ears, and may so far gratify their curiosity in this part of his sermon, as to give an easier entrance for the more plain, necessary, and important parts of it into their hearts. Then he aims at, and he reaches the sublime, and furnishes out an entertainment for the finest taste; but he scarcely ever finishes his sermon without compassion to the unlearned, and an address  
that



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that may reach their consciences with words of salvation..

I HAVE observed him sometimes after a learned discourse, come down from the pulpit as a man ashamed and quite out of countenance: he has blushed and complained to his intimate friends lest he should be thought to have preached himself, and not *Christ Jesus* his Lord: he has been ready to wish he had entertained the audience in a more unlearned manner, and on a more vulgar subject, lest the servants and the labourers, and tradesmen there, should reap no advantage to their souls, and the important hour of worship should be lost, as to their improvement. Well he knows, and keeps it upon his heart, that the middle and lower ranks of mankind, and people of an unlettered character, make up the greater part of the assembly; therefore he is ever seeking how to adapt his thoughts and his language, and for the greatest part of all his ministrations, to the instruction and profit of persons of common rank and capacity: it is in the midst of these that he hopes to find his triumph, his joy and crown in the last great day, for *not many wise, not many noble are called.*

THERE is so much spirit and beauty in his common conversation, that it is sought and desired by the ingenious men of his age: but he carries a severe guard of piety

always about him, that tempers the pleasant air of his discourse, even in his brightest and freest hours; and before he leaves the place (if possible) he will leave something of the favour of heaven there: in the parlour he carries on the design of the pulpit, but in so elegant a manner that it charms the company, and gives not the least occasion for censure.

His polite acquaintance will sometimes rally him for talking so plainly in his sermons, and sinking his good sense to so low a level: But *Ergates* is bold to tell the gayest of them, “ Our public business, “ my friend, is chiefly with the weak and “ the ignorant; that is, the bulk of mankind: *the poor receive the gospel*: the “ mechanics and day-labourers, the women and children of my assembly, have “ souls to be saved; I will imitate my blessed Redeemer, in *preaching the gospel to the “ poor*; and learn of St. *Paul* to become “ all things to all men, that I may win “ souls, and lead many sinners to heaven “ by repentance, faith and holiness.”

S E C T. II.

*A Branching Sermon.*

I HAVE always thought it a mistake in the preacher, to mince his text or his subject too small, by a great number of subdivisions; for it occasions great confusion of the understandings of the unlearned. Where a man divides his matter into more general, less general, special, and more particular heads, he is under a necessity sometimes of saying, *firstly* or *secondly*, two or three times together, which the learned may observe; but the greater part of the auditory, not knowing the *analysis*, cannot so much as take it into their minds, and much less treasure up in their memories in a just and regular order; and when such hearers are desired to give some account of the sermon, they throw the *thirdlys* and *secondlys* into heaps, and make very confused work in a rehearsal, by intermingling the general and the special heads. In writing a large discourse this is much more tolerable \*, but in preaching it

\* Especially as words may be used to number the generals; and figures of different kinds and forms, to marshal the primary and secondary ranks of particulars under them.

is less profitable and more intricate, and offensive.

IT is as vain an affectation also to draw out a long rank of particulars in the same sermon under any one general, and run up the number of them to *eighteenthly*, or *seven-and-twentiethly*. Men that take delight in this sort of work, will cut out all their sense into shreds; and every thing that they can say upon any topic, shall make a new particular.

THIS sort of folly and mistaken conduct appears weekly in *Polyramus's* lectures, and renders all his discourses lean and insipid. Whether it proceed from a mere barrenness of thought and a native dryness of soul, that he is not able to vary his matter, and to amplify beyond the formal topics of an *analysis*, or whether it arise from affectation of such a way of talking, is hard to say; but it is certain, that the chief part of his auditory are not over-much profited or pleased. When I sit under his preaching, I fancy myself brought into the valley of *Ezekiel's* vision; *it was full of bones, and behold, there were very many in the valley, and lo, they were very dry*, Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 2.

IT is the variety of enlargement upon a few proper heads, that clothes the dry bones and flesh, and animates them with blood and spirits; it is this that colours the discourse,



discourse, makes it warm and strong, and renders the divine propositions bright and persuasive: it is this brings down the doctrine or the duty to the understanding and conscience of the whole auditory, and commands the natural affections into the interest of the gospel: in short, it is this that, under the influence of the holy Spirit, gives life and force, beauty and success to a sermon, and provides food for souls. A single rose-bush, or a dwarf-pear, with all their leaves, flowers and fruit about them, have more beauty and spirit in themselves, and yield more food and pleasure to mankind, than the innumerable branches, boughs and twigs of a long hedge of thorns. The fruit will feed the hungry, and the flower will refresh the fainting; which is more than can be said of the thickest oak in *Bashan*, when it has lost its vital juice; it may spread its limbs indeed far and wide, but they are naked, withered, and sapless.

## S E C T. III.

*The H A R A N G U E.*

**I**S it not possible to forsake one extreme without running into a worse? Is there no *medium* between a sermon made up of sixty dry particulars, and a long loose declamation without any distinction of the  
parts

parts of it? Must the preacher divide his works by the breaks of a minute-watch, or let it run on incessantly to the last word, like the flowing stream of the hour-glass that measures his divinity? Surely *Fluvio* preaches as though he knew no medium; and having taken a disgust heretofore at one of *Polyramus's* lectures, he resolved his own discourses should have no distinction of particulars in them. His language flows smoothly in a long connection of periods, and glides over the ear like a rivulet of oil over polished marble, and like that too leaves no trace behind it. The attention is detained in a gentle pleasure, and (to say the best thing possible of it) the hearer is soothed in something like divine delight; but he can give the enquiring friend scarcely any account what it was that pleased him. He retains a faint idea of the sweetness, but has forgotten the sense.

TELL me *Fluvio*, is this the most effectual way to instruct ignorant creatures in the several articles of faith, and the various duties of the christian life? Will such a long uniform flow of language, imprint all the distant parts of christian knowledge on the mind, in their best form and order? Do you find such a gentle and gliding stream of words, most powerful to call up the souls of sinners from their dangerous or fatal lethargy? Will this indolent and moveless species

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cies of oratory, make a thoughtless wretch attend to matters of infinite moment? Can a long purling sound awaken a sleepy conscience, and give a perishing sinner just notices of his dreadful hazard? Can it furnish his understanding and his memory with all the awful and tremendous topics of our religion, when it scarcely ever leaves any distinct impression of one of them on his soul? Can you make the arrow wound where it will not stick? Where all the discourse vanishes from the remembrance, can you suppose the soul to be profited or enriched? When you brush over the closed eye-lids with a feather, did you ever find it give light to the blind? Has any of your soft harangues, your continued threads of silken eloquence, ever raised the dead? I fear your whole aim is to talk over the appointed number of minutes upon the subject, or to practise a little upon the gentler passions, without any concern how to give the understanding its due improvement, or to furnish the memory with any lasting treasure, or to make a knowing and a religious christian.

Ask old *Wheatfield* the rich farmer, ask *Plowdown* your neighbour, or any of his family who have sat all their lives under your ministry, what they know of the common truths of religion, or of the special articles of christianity. Desire them to tell you, what the gospel is, or what is salvation?



What are their duties toward God, or what they mean by religion? Who is *Jesus Christ*, or what is the meaning of his atonement or redemption by his blood? Perhaps you will tell me yourself, that you have very seldom entertained them with these subjects. Well, enquire of them what is heaven? Which is the way to obtain it, or what hope they have of dwelling there? Entreat them to tell you, wherein they have profited as to holiness of heart or life, or fitness for death. They will soon make it appear by their awkward answers, that they understood very little of all your fine discourses, and those of your predecessors; and have made but wretched improvement of forty years attendance at church. They have now and then been pleased, perhaps, with the music of your voice, as with the sound of a sweet instrument, and they mistook that for devotion; but their heads are dark still, and their hearts earthly; they are mere *beathens* with a *Christian* name, and know little more of God than their yokes of oxen. In short, *Polyramus's* auditors have some confusion in their knowledge, but *Fluvio's* hearers have scarcely any knowledge at all.

BUT you will tell me, your discourses are not all made up of harangue: your design is sometimes to inform the mind by a train of well connected reasonings, and that all your paragraphs in their long order prove  
and



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and support each other ; and though you do not distinguish your discourse into particulars, yet you have kept some invisible method all the way, and by some artificial gradations, you have brought your sermon down to the concluding sentence.

IT may be so sometimes, and I will acknowledge it : but believe me *Fluvio*, this artificial and invisible method, carries darkness with it instead of light ; nor is it by any means a proper way to instruct the vulgar, that is, the bulk of your *auditory* : their souls are not capable of so wide a stretch, as to take in the whole chain of your long connected consequences : you talk reason and religion to them in vain, if you do not make the argument so short as to come within their grasp, and give a frequent rest for their thoughts : you must break the bread of life into pieces to feed children with it, and part your discourses into distinct propositions, to give the ignorant a plain scheme of any one doctrine, and enable them to comprehend or retain it.

EVERY day gives us experiments to confirm what I say, and to encourage ministers to divide their sermons into several distinct heads of discourse. *Myrtilla*, a little creature of nine years old, was at church twice yesterday : in the morning the preacher entertained his audience with a running oration, and the child could give her parents

no other account of it, but that he talked smoothly and sweetly about virtue and heaven. It was *Ergates's* lot to fulfil the service of the afternoon; he is an excellent preacher, both for the wise and unwise: in the evening, *Myrtilla* very prettily entertained her mother with a repetition of the most considerable parts of the sermon; for “ Here, said she, I can fix my thoughts  
 “ upon *first*, *secondly*, and *thirdly*, upon the  
 “ doctrine, the reasons, and the inferences;  
 “ and I know what I must try to remember,  
 “ and repeat it when my friends shall ask  
 “ me: but as for the morning sermon I  
 “ could do nothing but hear it, for I could  
 “ not tell what I should get by heart.”

THIS manner of talking in a loose harangue, has not only injured our pulpits, but it makes the several *essays* and *treatises*, that are written now-a-days, less capable of improving the knowledge, or enriching the memory of the reader.

I WILL easily grant, that where the whole discourse reaches not beyond a few pages, there is no necessity of the formal proposal of the several parts, before you handle each of them distinctly, nor is there need of such a set method: the unlearned and narrow understanding can take an easy view of the whole, without the author's pointing to the several parts. But where the essay is prolonged to a greater extent, confusion grows  
 upon

upon the reader almost at every page, without some scheme or method of successive heads in the discourse, to direct the mind and aid the memory.

IF it be answered here, That neither such treatises nor sermons are a mere heap, for there is a just method observed in the composition, and the subjects are ranked in a proper order. It is easy to reply, That this method is so concealed, that a common reader or hearer can never find it; and you must suppose every one that peruses such a book, and much more that attends such a discourse, to have some good knowledge of the art of *Logic* before he can distinguish the various parts and branches, the connections and transitions of it. To an unlearned eye or ear, it appears a mere heap of good things without any method, form or order; and if you tell your young friends they should get it into their heads and hearts, they know not how to set about it.

IF we enquire, how it comes to pass that our modern ingenious writers should affect this manner? I know no juster reason to give for it, than a humorous and wanton contempt of the customs and practices of our forefathers; a sensible disgust taken at some of their mistakes and ill conduct, at first tempted a vain generation into the contrary extreme near sixty years ago; and now even to this day it continues too much in fashion,



so that the wise as well as the weak are ashamed to oppose it, and are borne down with the current.

OUR fathers formed their sermons much upon the model of *doctrine*, *reason* and *use*; and perhaps there is no one method of more universal service, and more easily applicable to most subjects, though it is not necessary or proper in every discourse: but the very names of *doctrine* and *use* are become now-a-days such stale and old fashioned things, that a modish preacher is quite ashamed of them, nor can a modish hearer bear the sound of those syllables: a direct and distinct address to the consciences of *saints* and *sinners*, must not be named or mentioned, though these terms are scriptural; lest it should be hissed out of the church, like the garb of a round-head or a puritan.

SOME of our fathers have multiplied their particulars under one single head of discourse, and run up the tale of them to *sixteen* or *seventeen*. Culpable indeed, and too numerous! But in opposition to this extreme, we are almost ashamed in our age to say *thirdly*; and all *fourthly's* and *fifthly's* are very unfashionable words.

OUR fathers made too great account of the sciences of *logic* and *metaphysics*, and the formalities of *definition* and *division*, *syllogism* and *method*, when they brought them

so



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so often into the pulpit ; but we hold those arts so much in contempt and defiance, that we had rather talk a whole hour without order and without edification, than be suspected of using *logic* or method in our discourses.

SOME of our fathers neglected *politeness* perhaps too much, and indulged a coarseness of style, and a rough or awkward pronunciation ; but we have such a value for elegance, and so nice a taste for what we call *polite*, that we dare not spoil the cadence of a period to quote a text of scripture in it, nor disturb the harmony of our sentences, to number or to name the heads of our discourse. And for this reason, I have heard it hinted, that the name of CHRIST has been banished out of polite sermons, because it is a monosyllable of so many consonants, and so harsh a sound.

BUT after all, our fathers with all their defects, and with all their weaknesses, preached the gospel of *Christ* to the sensible instruction of whole parishes, to the conversion of sinners from the errors of their way, and the salvation of multitudes of souls. But it has been the late complaint of Dr. *Edwards*, and other worthy sons of the established church, that in too many pulpits now-a-days, there are only heard some smooth declamations, while the hearers that were ignorant of the gospel, abide

still without knowledge, and the profane sinners are profane still. O that divine grace would descend and reform what is amiss in all the sanctuaries of the nation \*.

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## C H A P. VII.

### *Of writing Books for the Public.*

**I**N the *explication* and *distinction* of words and things by definition and description, in the *division* of things into their several parts, and in the *distribution* of things into their several kinds, be sure to observe a just medium. We must not always explain and distinguish, define, divide and distribute, nor must we always omit it: sometimes it is useless and impertinent, some-

\* It appears by the date, at the bottom of this paper in the MSS. that it was written in the year 1718. The first and perhaps the second section of it, may seem now to be grown in a great measure out of date; but whether the third is not at least as seasonable now as ever, may deserve serious consideration. The author since this was drawn up, hath delivered his sentiments more fully in the first part of that excellent piece entitled, *An humble Attempt for the Revival of Religion.* &c.

times

times it is proper and necessary. There is confusion brought into our argument and discourse by too many, or by too few of these. One author plunges his reader into the midst of *things* without due explication of them; another jumbles together without distinction, all those ideas which have any likeness; a third is fond of explaining every word, and coining distinctions between ideas which have little or no difference; but each of these runs into extremes; for all these practices are equal hindrances to clear, just, and useful knowledge. It is not a long train of rules, but observation and good judgment, can teach us when to explain, define and divide, and where to omit it.

IN the beginning of a treatise, it is proper and necessary sometimes to premise *some præcognita* or *general principles*, which may serve for an introduction to the subject in hand, and give light or strength to the following discourse: but it is ridiculous, under a pretence of such *introductions* or *prefaces*, to wander to the most remote or distant themes, which have no near or necessary connection with the thing in hand; this serves for no other purpose but to make a gaudy shew of learning. There was a professor of divinity, who began an *analytical exposition of the epistle to the Romans* with such *præcognita* as these: first he shewed the



*excellence of man* above other creatures, who was able to declare the sense of his mind by arbitrary signs ; then he harangued upon the *origin of speech* ; after that he told of the wonderful *invention of writing*, and enquired into the author of that art which taught us to paint sounds : when he had given us the various opinions of the learned on this point, and distributed *writing* into its *several kinds*, and laid down definitions of them all, at last he came to speak of *epistolary writing*, and distinguished *epistles* into *familiar, private, public, recommendatory credentials*, and what not ? Thence he descended to speak of the *superscription, subscription, &c.* And some lectures were finished before he came to the first verse of *St. Paul's epistle* ; the auditors, being half starved and tired with expectation, dropped away one by one, so that the Professor had scarce any hearers to attend the college or the lectures which he had promised on that part of scripture.

THE rules which *Horace* has given in his *Art of Poetry*, would instruct many a *preacher* and *professor of theology*, if they would but attend to them. He informs us that a wise author, such as *Homer*, who writes a poem of the *Trojan War*, would not begin a long and far distant story of *Jupiter* in the form of a swan impregnating *Leda* with a double egg ; from one part whereof

*Helen*



*Helen* was hatched, who was married to *Menelaus* a *Greek* general, and then stolen from him by *Paris*, son of *Priam* king of *Troy*, which awakened the resentment of the *Greeks* against the *Trojans*.

*Nec gemino bellum Trojanum orditur ab ovo.*

But the writer, says he, makes all proper haste to the event of things, and does not drag on slowly, perpetually turning aside from his point, and catching at every incident to prolong his story, as though he wanted matter to furnish out his tale.

*Semper ad eventum festinat.*

Though I must confess, I cannot think *Homer* has always followed this rule in either of his two famous epic poems: but *Horace* does not hear what I say. There is also another rule near a-kin to the former.

As a writer or a speaker should not wander from his subject to fetch in foreign matter from afar, so neither should he amass together and drag in all that can be said, even on his appointed theme of discourse; but he should consider what is his chief design, what is the end he hath in view, and then to make every part of his discourse subserve that design. If he keep his great end always in his eye, he will pass hastily over

those parts or appendages of his subject which have no evident connection with his design, or he will entirely omit them, and hasten continually towards his intended mark ; employing his time, his study and labour, chiefly on that part of his subject which is most necessary to attain his present and proper end.

THIS might be illustrated by a multitude of examples ; but an author who should heap them together on such an occasion, might be in danger of becoming himself an example of the impertinence he is cautioning others to avoid.

AFTER you have finished any discourse which you design for the public, it would be always best, if other circumstances would permit, to *let it sleep some time before you expose it to the world*, that so you may have opportunity to review it with the indifference of a stranger, and to make the whole of it pass under a new and just examination : for no man can judge so justly of his own work, while the pleasure of his invention and performance is fresh, and has engaged his self-love too much on the side of what he has newly finished.

IF an author would send a discourse into the world, which should be most universally approved, he should *consult persons of very different genius, sentiment and party*, and endeavour to learn their opinions  
of

of it. In the world it will certainly meet with all these. Set it therefore to view amongst several of your acquaintance first, who may survey the argument on all sides, and one may happen to suggest a correction which is entirely neglected by others; and be sure to *yield yourself to the dictates of true criticism, and just censure, wheresoever you meet with them*; nor let a fondness for what you have written, blind your eyes against the discovery of your own mistakes.

WHEN an author desires a friend to revise his work, it is too frequent a practice to disallow almost every correction which a judicious friend would make; he apologizes for this word, and the other expression; he vindicates this sentence, and gives his reasons for another paragraph, and scarcely ever submits to correction; and this utterly discourages the freedom that a true friend would take, in pointing out our mistakes. Such writers who are so full of themselves, may go on to admire their own uncorrect performances, and expose their works and their follies to the world without pity†.

† To cut off such chicanery, it may perhaps be the most expedient for a person consulted, on such an occasion, to note down on a distinct paper, with proper references, the advised alterations, referring it to the author, to make such use of them as he, on due deliberation, shall think fit.



*HORACE*, in his Art of Poetry, talks admirably well on this subject :

*Quintilio si quid recitares, corrige, sodes,  
Hoc, aiebat, & hoc ; melius te posse negares  
Bis terque expertum frustra ; delere jubebat,  
Et male tornatos incudi reddere versus.  
Si defendere delictum, quam vertere, malles ;  
Nulla ultra verbum, aut operam insumebat  
          inanem,  
Quin sine rivali teque & tua solus amares.*

Let good *Quintilius* all your lines revise,  
And he will freely say, mend this and this ;  
*Sir, I have often try'd, and try'd again,  
I'm sure I can't do better, 'tis in vain ;*  
Then blot out ev'ry word, or try once more,  
And file these ill-turn'd verses o'er and o'er :  
But if you seem in love with your own  
          thought,  
More eager to defend, than mend, your fault,  
He says no more, but lets the fop go on,  
And, rival-free, admire his lovely own.

CREECH.

If you have not the advantage of friends to survey your writings, then read them over yourself, and all the way consider what will be the sentence and judgment of all the various characters of mankind upon them : think what one of your own party would say, or what would be the sense of an



an adversary : imagine what a curious or a malicious man, what a captious or an envious critic, what a vulgar or a learned reader would object, either to the matter, the manner, or the style : and be sure and think with yourself, what you yourself could say against your own writing, if you were of a different opinion, or a stranger to the writer : and by these means you will obtain some hints, whereby to correct and improve your own work, and to guard it better against the censures of the public, as well as to render it more useful to that part of mankind for whom you chiefly design it.

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## C H A P. VIII.

*Of Writing and Reading CONTROVERSIES.*

## S E C T. I.

*Of Writing Controversies.*

**W**HEN a person of good sense writes on any controverted subject, he will generally bring the strongest arguments that

that are usually to be found for the support of his opinion ; and when that is done, he will represent the most powerful objections, against it in a fair and candid manner, giving them their full force ; and at last will put in such an answer to those objections, as he thinks will dissipate and dissolve the force of them : and herein the reader will generally find a full view of the controversy, together with the main strength of argument on both sides.

WHEN *a good writer* has set forth his own opinion at large, and vindicated it with its fairest and strongest proofs, he shall be attacked by some pen on the other side of the question ; and if his *opponent* be a wise and sensible writer, he will shew the best reasons why the former opinions cannot be true ; that is, he will draw out the objections against them in their fullest array, in order to destroy what he supposes a mistaken opinion ; and here we may reasonably suppose, that an opponent will draw up his objections against the supposed error in a brighter light, and with stronger evidence than the first writer did, who propounded his opinion which was contrary to those objections.

IF, in the third place, the first writer answers his opponent with care and diligence, and maintains his own point against the objections which were raised in the best

man-

manner; the reader may then generally presume, that in these three pieces he has a complete view of the controversy; together with the most solid and powerful arguments on both sides of the debate.

BUT when a *fourth*, and *fifth*, and *sixth* volume appears in *rejoinders* and *replies*, we cannot reasonably expect any great degrees of light to be derived from them; or that much farther evidences for truth should be found in them: and it is sufficiently evident from daily experience, that many mischiefs attend this prolongation of controversies among men of learning, which for the most part do injury to the truth, either by turning the attention of the reader quite away from the original point to other matters, or by covering the truth with a multitude of occasional incidents and perplexities, which serve to bewilder rather than guide a faithful enquirer.

SOMETIMES, in these latter volumes, the writers on both sides will hang upon *little words* and *occasional expressions* of their opponent in order to expose them, which have no necessary connection with the grand point in view, and which have nothing to do with the debated truth.

SOMETIMES they will spend many a page in vindicating their own character, or their own little sentences or accidental expressions,

pressions, from the remarks of their opponent, in which expressions or remarks the original truth has no concern.

AND sometimes again you shall find even writers of good sense, who have happened to express themselves in an improper and indefensible manner, led away by the fondness of self-love to justify those expressions, and vindicate those little lapses they were guilty of, rather than they will condescend to correct those little mistakes, or recall those improper expressions. O that we could put off our pride, our self-sufficiency, and our infallibility, when we enter into a debate of truth. But if the writer is guilty of mingling these things with his grand argument, happy will that reader be who has judgment enough to distinguish them, and to neglect every thing that does not belong to the original theme proposed and disputed.

YET here it may be proper to put in one exception to this general observation or remark, namely, when the *second writer* attacks only a *particular* or *collateral opinion* which was maintained by the first, then the *fourth writing* may be supposed to contain a necessary part of the complete force of the argument, as well as the *second* and *third*, because the *first writing* only occasionally or collaterally mentioned that sentiment which the *second* attacks and opposes ;  
and



and in such a case, the *second* may be esteemed as the first treatise on that controversy. It would take up too much time should we mention instances of this kind, which might be pointed to in most of our controversial writers, and it might be invidious to enter into the detail\*.

## S E C T. II.

*Of Reading Controversies.*

WHEN we take a book into our hands wherein any doctrine or opinion is printed in a way of argument,

\* Upon this it may be remarked farther, that there is a certain spirit of modesty and benevolence which never fails to adorn a writer on such occasions, and which generally does him much more service in the judgment of wise and sensible men, than any poignancy of satire with which he might be able to animate his productions; and as this always appears amiable, so is it peculiarly charming, when the opponent shews that pertness and petulancy which is so very common on such occasions. When a writer, instead of pursuing with eager resentment the antagonist that has given such provocation, calmly attends to the main question in debate, with a noble negligence of those little advantages which ill-nature and ill-manners always give, he acquires a glory far superior to any trophies which wit can raise. And it is highly probable, that the solid instruction his pages may contain, will give a continuance to his writings far beyond what tracts of peevish controversy are to expect, of which the much greater part are borne away into oblivion by the wind they raise, or burned in their own flames.

we

we are too often satisfied and determined before-hand, whether it be *right* or *wrong*; and if we are on the writer's side, we are generally tempted to take his arguments for solid and substantial: and thus our own former sentiment is established more powerfully, without a sincere search after truth.

If we are on the other side of the question, we then take it for granted that there is nothing of force in these arguments, and we are satisfied with a short survey of the book, and are soon persuaded to pronounce mistake, weakness and insufficiency concerning it. Multitudes of common readers, who are fallen into any error, when they are directed and advised to read a treatise that would set them right, read it with a sort of disgust which they have before entertained; they skim lightly over the arguments, they neglect or despise the force of them, and keep their own conclusion firm in their assent, and thus they maintain their error in the midst of light, and grow incapable of conviction.

BUT if we would indeed act like *sincere searchers for the truth*, we should survey every argument with a careful and unbiassed mind, whether it agree with our former opinion or no: we should give every reasoning its full force, and weigh it in our sedatest judgment. Now the best way to try what force there is in the arguments  
which

which are brought against our own opinions is, to sit down and endeavour to give a solid answer, one by one, to every argument that the author brings to support his own doctrine: and in this attempt, if we find there some arguments which we are not able to answer fairly to our own minds, we should then begin to bethink ourselves, whether we have not been hitherto in a mistake, and whether the defender of the contrary sentiments may not be in the right. Such a method as this, will effectually forbid us to pronounce at once against those doctrines, and those writers, which are contrary to our sentiments; and we shall endeavour to find solid arguments to refute their positions, before we entirely establish ourselves in a contrary opinion.

*VOLATILIS* had given himself up to the conversation of the *free-thinkers* of our age, upon all subjects; and being pleased with the wit and appearance of argument, in some of our modern-*deists*, had too easily deserted the christian faith, and gone over to the camp of the infidels. Among other books which were recommended to him, to reduce him to the faith of the gospel, he had Mr. *John Reynolds's three Letters to a Deist* put into his hand, and was particularly desired to peruse the third of them with the utmost care, as being an unanswerable defence of the truth



of christianity. He took it in hand, and after having given it a short survey, he told his friend he saw nothing in it, but the common arguments which we all use to support the religion in which we had been educated, but they wrought no conviction in him; nor did he see sufficient reason to believe, that the gospel of Christ was not a piece of *enthusiasm*, or a mere *imposture*.

UPON this the friend who recommended Mr. *Reynolds's three Letters* to his study, being confident of the force of truth which lay there, entreated of *Volatilis* that he would set himself down with diligence, and try to answer Mr. *Reynolds's third Letter* in vindication of the gospel; and that he would show under every head, how the several steps which were taken in the propagation of the christian religion, might be the natural effects of imposture or enthusiasm; and consequently, that it deserves no credit among men.

*VOLATILIS* undertook the work, and after he had entered a little way into it, found himself so bewildered, and his arguments to prove the apostles either enthusiasts or impostors so muddled, so perplexed and so inconclusive, that by a diligent review of this letter to the deist, at last he acknowledged himself fully convinced that the religion of Jesus was divine; for that christian author had made it appear, it



was impossible, that doctrine should have been propagated in the world by simplicity or folly, by fraud or falsehood; and accordingly, resigned his soul up to the gospel of the blessed Jesus.

I FEAR there have been multitudes of such unbelievers as *Volatilis*; and he himself has confessed to me, that even his most rational friends would be constrained to yield to the evidence of the *christian* doctrine, if they would honestly try the same method.

A  
DISCOURSE  
ON THE  
EDUCATION  
OF  
CHILDREN and YOUTH.

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INTRODUCTION.

*Of the Importance of Education, and the Design of this Discourse, with a Plan of it.*

THE children of the present age, are the hope of the age to come. We who are now acting our several parts in the busy scenes of life, are hastening off the stage apace: months and days are

are sweeping us away from the business and the surface of this earth, and continually laying some of us to sleep underground. The circle of thirty years will plant another generation in our room: another set of mortals will be the chief actors in all the greater and lesser affairs of this life, and will fill the world with blessings or with mischiefs, when our heads lie low in the dust,

SHALL we not then consider with ourselves, what can we do now to prevent those mischiefs, and to entail blessings on our successors? What shall we do to secure wisdom, goodness and religion among the next generation of men? Have we any concern for the glory of God in the rising age? any solicitude for the propagation of virtue and happiness to those who shall stand up in our stead? Let us then hearken to the voice of GOD and *Solomon*, and we shall learn how this may be done: the all-wise God, and the wisest of men, join to give us this advice; *Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* The sense of it may be expressed more at large in this proposition, namely, *Let children have a good education given them in the younger parts of life, and this is the most likely way to establish them in virtue and piety in their elder years.*

IN this discourse, I shall not enter into any enquiries about the management of children in the two or three first years of their life: I leave that tender age entirely to the care of the mother and the nurse; yet not without a wish, that some wiser and happier pen would give advice or friendly notice to nurses and mothers, of what they ought to avoid, and what they ought to do in those early seasons: and indeed, they may do much towards the future welfare of those young buds and blossoms, those lesser pieces of human nature, which are their proper charge. Some of the seeds of virtue and goodness, may be conveyed almost into their very constitution betimes, by the pious prudence of those who have the conduct of them: and some forward vices may be nipped in the very bud, which in three years time might gain too firm a root in their heart and practice, and may not easily be plucked up by all the following care of their teachers.

BUT I begin with children when they can walk and talk, when they have learned their mother tongue, when they begin to give some more evident discoveries of their intellectual powers, and are more manifestly capable of having their minds formed and moulded into knowledge, virtue and piety.

Now the first and most universal ingredient which enters into the education of  
children,



children, is an *instruction of them in those things which are necessary and useful for them in their rank and station, and that with regard to this world and the world to come.*

I LIMIT these instructions (especially such as relate to this world) by the *station and rank of life* in which children are born and placed by the providence of God. Persons of better circumstances in the world, should give their sons and their daughters a much larger share of knowledge and a richer variety of instruction, than meaner persons can or ought. But since every child that is born into this world hath a body and a soul, since its happiness or misery in this world and the next, depends very much upon its instructions and knowledge, it hath a right to be taught by its parents, according to their best ability, so much as is necessary for its well-being both in soul and body here and hereafter.

It is true, that the great God our Creator hath made us reasonable creatures: we are by nature capable of learning a million of objects: but as the soul comes into the world, it is unfurnished with knowledge; we are born ignorant of every good and useful thing: we know not God, we know not ourselves, we know not what is our duty and our interest, nor where lies our danger; and, if left entirely to our-

selves, should probably grow up like the brutes of the earth ; we should trifle away the brighter seasons of life in a thousand crimes and follies, and endure the fatigues and burdens of it, surrounded with a thousand miseries ; and at last we should perish and die without knowledge or hope, if we had no instructors.

ALL our other powers of nature, such as the will and the various affections, the senses, the appetites, and the limbs, would become wild instruments of madness and mischief, if not governed by the understanding : and the understanding itself would run into a thousand errors, dreadful and pernicious, and would employ all the other powers in mischief and madness, if it hath not the happiness to be instructed in the things of God and men. And who is there among all our fellow creatures so much obliged to bestow this instruction on us, as the persons who by Divine Providence, have been the instruments to bring us into life and being ? It is their duty to give their young offspring this benefit of instruction, as far as they are able ; or at least to provide such instructors for them, and to put the children under their care.

HERE let us therefore enquire, *what are the several things in which children should be instructed ?* And upon a due survey, we shall

shall find the most important things which children ought to learn and know, are these which follow.

S E C T. I.

*Of instructing Children in Religion.*

**R**ELIGION, in all the parts of it, both what they are to believe and what they are to practise, is most necessary to be taught. I mention this in the first place, not only because it is a matter of the highest importance, and of most universal concern to all mankind, but because it may be taught even in these very early years of life. As soon as children begin to know almost any thing, and to exercise their reason about matters that lie within the reach of their knowledge, they may be brought to know so much of religion as is necessary for their age and state. For instance,

1. **YOUNG** children may be taught that there is a God, a great and almighty God who made them, and who gives them every good thing. That he sees them every where, though they cannot see him; and that he takes notice of all their behaviour.

2. **THEY** must be told what they should do, and what they should avoid, in order to please God. They should be taught in general



neral to know the difference between good and evil. They may learn, that it is their duty to fear and love, and worship God, to pray to him for what they want, and to praise him for what they enjoy; to obey their parents, to speak truth, and to be honest and friendly to all mankind; and to set a guard upon their own appetites and passions. And that to neglect these things, or to do any thing contrary to them, is sinful in the sight of God.

3. THEIR consciences are capable of receiving conviction when they have neglected these duties, or broken the commands of God or of their parents; and they may be made sensible that the great and holy God, who loves the righteous and bestows blessings upon them, is angry with those who have broken his commands and sinned against him; and therefore that they themselves are become subject to his displeasure.

4. THEY may be told, that there is another world after this; and that their souls do not die when their bodies die: that they shall be taken up into heaven, which is a state of pleasure and happiness, if they have been good and holy in this world: but if they have been wicked children they must go down to hell, which is a state of misery and torment.

5. YOU may also inform them, that though their bodies die and are buried, yet  
God



God can and will raise them to life again : and that their body and soul together must be made happy or miserable, according to their behaviour in this life.

6. THEY may be taught, that there is no way for such sinful creatures as we are to be received into God's favour, but for the sake of *Jesus Christ* the Son of God ; who came down from heaven into our world, and lived a life of pure and perfect holiness, and suffered death to reconcile sinners to the great and holy God, who is offended by the sins of men ; and now he lives in heaven to plead for mercy for them : and that as this *Jesus Christ* is the only reconciler between God and man, so all their hope must be placed in him.

7. THEY may be taught, that their very natures are sinful : they may be convinced, that they are inclined naturally to do evil : and they should be informed, that it is the *holy Spirit of God*, who must cure the evil temper of their own spirits, and make them holy and fit to dwell with God in heaven.

8. THEY should also be instructed to pray to God, that for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, the great mediator or reconciler, he would pardon their sins past, and help them by his Spirit to love and serve him with zeal and faithfulness for the time to come : that he would bestow all necessary blessings upon them

them in this world, and bring them safe at last to his heavenly kingdom.

9. IN the last place they should be informed, that our blessed Saviour has appointed two ordinances to be observed by all his followers to the end of the world, which are usually called sacraments.

THE one is *baptism*, wherein persons are to be washed with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, to signify their being given up to *Christ* as his disciples, or professors of christianity; and as an emblem of that purity of heart and life, which, as such, they must aim at and endeavour after.

THE other is the *Lord's supper*, wherein bread is broken and wine is poured out, and distributed to be eaten and drank by christians in remembrance of the body of *Christ*, which was put to a bloody death, as a sacrifice to obtain pardon for the sins of men.

THE first of these, namely, *baptism*, is but once to be administered to any person; but the last, namely, the *Lord's supper*, is to be frequently performed, to keep us always in mind of the death of *Christ*, till he comes again from heaven to judge the world.

THIS is the *sum and substance of the christian religion*, drawn out into a very few plain articles: and I think a child of common capacity, who is arrived at three

or

or four years of age, may be taught some part of these articles, and may learn to understand them all at seven, or eight, or nine; at least so far as is needful, for all his own exercises of devotion and piety. As his age increases, he may be instructed more at large in the principles and practices of our holy religion, as I shall shew more particularly in the third section.

## S E C T. II.

*The Exercise and Improvement of their natural Powers.*

HAVING mentioned *religion* as the principal thing in which children should be instructed, I proceed to say, in the second place, that *children should be taught the true use, the exercise and improvement of their natural powers*: and we may for order sake distinguish these into the powers of the body, and those of the mind: now though nature gives these powers and faculties, yet it is a good education that must instruct us in the exercise and improvement of them: otherwise, like an uncultivated field, they will be ever barren and fruitless, or produce weeds and briars instead of herbs and corn.

AMONG the *powers of the mind* which are to be thus cultivated we may reckon the  
*under-*

*understanding, the memory, the judgment, the faculty of reasoning, and the conscience.*

I. *TEACH them to use their understanding aright.* Periuade them to value their understanding as a noble faculty, and allure them to seek after the enrichment of it with a variety of knowledge. Let no day escape without adding some new ideas to their understanding, and giving their young unfurnished minds some further notion of things.

ALMOST every thing is new to a child, and novelty will entice them onward to new acquisitions: shew them the birds, the beasts, the fishes and insects, trees, herbs, fruits, and all the several parts and properties of the vegetable and the animal world: teach them to observe the various occurrences in nature and providence, the sun, moon and stars, the day and night, summer and winter, the clouds and the sky, the hail, snow and ice, winds, fire, water, earth, air, fields, woods, mountains, rivers, &c. Teach them that the great God made all these things, and his providence governs them all. Acquaint a child also with domestic affairs so far as is needful, and with the things that belong to the civil and the military life, the church and the state, with the works of God and the works of men. A thousand objects that  
strike



strike their eyes, their ears, and all their senses, will furnish out new matter for their curiosity and your instructions.

THERE are some books which are published in the world, wherein a child may be delightfully led into the knowledge of a great number of these things by pictures, or figures of birds, beasts, &c. well graven, with their names under them; this will much assist the labour of the teacher, and add to the pleasure of children in their daily learning.

You who instruct them, should allure their young curiosity to ask many questions, encourage them in it, and gratify their enquiries, by giving them the best and most satisfactory answers you can frame, and accommodate all your language to their capacity.

GIVE them, as far as possible, clear ideas of things, and teach them how to distinguish one thing from another by their different appearances, by their different properties, and by their different effects. Shew them how far some things agree with others, and how far they differ from them; and above all things teach them, as far as their young understandings will admit, to distinguish between appearances and realities, between truth and falsehood, between good and evil, between trifles and things of importance; for these are the most valuable

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luable pieces of knowledge and distinction, which can be lodged in the young understandings of children.

2. The *memory* is another faculty of the soul, which *should be cultivated and improved*: endeavour carefully to impress on their minds things of worth and value. Such are, short and useful and entertaining stories, which carry in them some virtue recommended, some vice ridiculed or punished; various human and divine truths, rules of piety and virtue, precepts of prudence, &c. Repeat these things often to them by day and by night; teach them these things in verse and in prose; rehearse them in their ears at all proper seasons, and take occasion to make them repeat these things to you.

BE solicitous to know what it is they learn when they are out of your sight, and take good care that their memories be not charged with trifles and idle trumpery. The memory is a noble repository or cabinet of the soul, it should not be filled with rubbish and lumber. Silly tales and foolish songs, the conundrums of nurses, and the dull rhimes that are sung to lull children asleep, or to sooth a froward humour, should be generally forbidden to entertain those children where a good education is designed. Something more innocent, more solid and profitable may be invented

vented instead of these fooleries. If it were possible, let a very few things be lodged in the memory of children which they need to forget when they are men.

THE way to strengthen and improve the memory, is to put it upon daily exercise. I do not mean that young children should be kept so close to their book as to be crammed with lessons all the day long, and made to receive and sustain a heavy load every hour. The powers of the soul (especially such as act in close concert with the body, and are so much aided by the brain) may be overburdened, and injured, as well as the limbs: the mind may be perplexed and confounded, the head may be overstrained and weakened; and the health impaired in those tender years of life, by an excessive imposition on the memory: the teachers of children should have some prudence, to distinguish their ages and their several capacities: they should know how to avoid extremes.

BUT in general it may be said, that *the powers of the mind, as well as those of the body, grow stronger by a constant and moderate exercise.* Every day let the memory of a child be entrusted with something new: every day let some lesson be learned: and every Lord's-day at least, even in their youngest years, let them learn by heart some one text of scripture, (chiefly



that on which the minister preaches :) this will grow up in time to a considerable treasure of scriptural knowledge, which will be of unspeakable use to them in the christian life. I have known children, who from their early years have been constantly trained up and taught to remember a few sentences of a sermon besides the text, and by this means have grown up by degrees to know all the distinct parts and branches of a discourse, and in time to write down half the sermon after they came home, to their own consolation, and the improvement of their friends: whereas those who have been never taught to use their memories in their younger parts of life, lose every thing from their thoughts when it is past off from their ears, and come home from noble and edifying discourses, pleased (it may be) with the transient sound, and commending the preacher, but uninstructed, unimproved, without any growth in knowledge or piety.

3. *THE judgment* is another natural power of the mind which *should be exercised and improved in children*. They should be taught to *pass no judgment on men or things rashly or suddenly*, but to withhold their judgment till they see sufficient reason to determine them. To this end, shew them in little common instances how often they are deceived when they judge on a sudden,



sudden, without due consideration, and how often they are forced to change their opinions. Put them in mind how soon they have found themselves mistaken, when they have given their opinions too hastily. This will make them cautious, and afraid of being so rash, either in praising one thing or in condemning another.

TEACH them to judge, not merely by *outward shew and appearance, but by searching things to the bottom.* Convince them that every man who hath fine clothes is not rich; and that every man who talks hard words is not wise or learned; that every one who wears a red coat is not a soldier; nor is every person good-humoured, who speaks very complaisant things in company. Take frequent occasion to shew them, how much they will be mistaken if they judge immediately by outward appearances of things.

TELL them, that they must not judge of things *by custom, nor by the common opinions of the multitude, nor by the practices of the rich and the great:* for all these things may deceive them: but that they must judge of things merely by reason, except in matters of religion, and there they must judge rather by scripture or the word of God. Let them know, that *customs* change and alter, and the customs of one age or of one nation differ greatly from those of ano-

other ; but that the nature and the reason of things is still the same, and that scripture is the constant and unchangeable rule of our religion.

To confirm this, let them be informed that it was the custom of our ancestors in *England*, and it is now the custom in *France* and *Spain*, to say their prayers in *Latin*, and to worship images : But it is a sinful custom, though the *multitudes* of the common people agree in it, and though the *great and the rich* practise it also. Nor is our present custom in *Great-Britain*, of praying in *English* and worshipping no images, to be esteemed the right way of worship because it is the custom of the nation, but because it is agreeable to the word of God, which forbids us to worship images, or to pray in an unknown tongue.

TAKE every occasion to guard them against prejudices, and passing a judgment on men or things upon insufficient grounds.

4. *THE reasoning powers of the mind should be cultivated and improved in children.* This is very near akin to the former, and therefore I shall be very brief here.

WHENSOEVER children give you their opinion of any thing, ask them to give you also the reason why they are of that opinion : whensoever they desire or wish for any thing, or shew an aversion to it, enquire what is the reason of their desire or aversion :

aversion: When they have done any thing of their own will, ask them the reason why they did it. And when you do any thing that is for their good, shew them the reason why you do it, and convince them that it was fit and necessary to be done, though perhaps it was not so pleasing to them.

By calling their young *reason* thus into exercise, you will teach them *wisdom* betimes: you will awaken manly thoughts within them, and soon lead them to a rational and manly conduct in their childish years: by this means also you will always have a handle to take hold of, in order to persuade them to their duty, and to save them from mischief. But if their *reasoning powers* be neglected, you will train them up like the *horse and the mule who have no understanding*: they will grow like brutes in the shape of men, and reason will have but little power over them in the following parts of life.

5. *CONSCIENCE* is another natural power of the soul, wherein the principles of virtue and rules of duty to God and man are to be laid up: it is something within us that calls us to account for our faults, and by which we pass a judgment concerning ourselves and all our actions.

CHILDREN have a *conscience* within them, and it should be awakened early to



its duty. They should be taught to reflect and look back upon their own behaviour, to call themselves often to account, to compare their deeds with those good rules and principles laid up in their minds, and to see how far they have complied with them, and how far they have neglected them. Parents should teach their children to pay a religious respect to the inward dictates of virtue within them, to examine their actions continually by the light of their own consciences, and to rejoice when they can approve themselves to their own minds, that they have acted well according to the best of their knowledge: they ought also to attend to the inward reproofs of conscience, and mourn, and be ashamed, and repent when they have sinned against their light. It is of admirable use toward all the practices of religion and every virtue, to have conscience well stored with good principles, and to be always kept tender and watchful; it is proper that children should learn to reverence and obey this inward monitor betimes, that every wilful sin may give their consciences a sensible pain and uneasiness, and that they may be disposed to sacrifice every thing else to considerations of conscience, and to endure any extremities rather than act contrary to it.

I proceed in the next place to consider, the *several powers of the body* which ought  
to



to be regulated and managed by the due instruction of children in their younger years. Now as the God of nature has given children eyes, and tongues, and feet, and arms, and hands, it is expedient that parents should teach their children the proper use of them.

I. THE God of nature hath given them eyes. Let their parents teach them to use these eyes aright. Would it be amiss in me here to give a hint or two of this kind? May not children be warned against a staring look, against stretching their eye-lids into a glare of wildness? may they not be forbid to look aside on any object in a squinting manner, when their faces are turned another way? should they not be instructed to look directly with their face turned to the thing they look at? May they not be taught with due courage to look in the face of the person they speak to, yet with an humble modest aspect, as befits a child? A becoming courage and a becoming modesty dwell much in the eye,

SOME children should be often admonished to lay aside a gloomy and a frowning look, a scowling air, an uneasy and forbidding aspect. They should be taught to smooth the ruffles of their brow, and put on a lively, pleasing, and cheerful countenance among their friends: some there are who have all these graces by nature, but

those who have them not may be corrected and softened by the care of parents in younger years \*.

2. LET parents teach children to use their *tongues* properly and agreeably; not only to speak, but to pronounce their words plain and distinct. Let them be instructed to keep due and proper distances between their words and sentences, and not speak in a swift hurry, with a tumult of syllables and clutter upon their lips, which will sound like a foreign gibberish, and never be understood. Nor should they drawl out their words in a slow long tone, which is equally ungraceful and disagreeable.

THERE are two other common faults in speaking, and where they are found they should be corrected early in children.

THE one is *lissing*, which is a pronunciation of the letter S or Z, or C before E and I, as though it were TH. Thus, instead of *spice* they cry *thpith*, instead of *cease* they say *theat*. This may be cured by teaching them to pronounce a few such words

\* It may here be recollected by the way, that a gloominess aspect does not always arise from a malignity of temper, but sometimes from fear of displeasing and incurring reproof; and is therefore often to be removed by speaking kindly to children, and encouraging them with expressions of candor and tenderness. To know how in such cases to divert a child, and make him cheerful and happy in the company of a parent, is none of the least important cares of education.

words as these, where the sound of the letter S prevails, with their teeth shut close: and by forbidding them to put their tongue between their teeth at any time, except when *ts* is to be pronounced.

THE other fault is *stammering*, which I suppose may be commonly prevented or cured by teaching children not to speak much, and to speak slow always; and they should be warned against all anger or hastiness, or eagerness of spirit; for such a temper will throw out their words faster than the organs of speech can accommodate themselves to form the syllables, and thus bring a hurry and confusion into their speech: and they should also gain a good degree of courage or becoming assurance, and not speak with much concern or fear; for fear will stop the organs of speech, and hinder the formation of words.

BUT I insist no longer on the use of the *tongue* in speaking.

3. As God hath given them *feet*, let parents teach them to stand firm and strong, and to walk in a becoming and decent manner, without waddling from side to side, without turning either or both of their feet inward, without little jerks in their motion, or long strides, or any of those awkwardnesses which continue with many persons to old age, for want of having these irregularities corrected when they were young.



young. Children should be indulged in their sports, sometimes in running swiftly, and in leaping, where there is no danger, in order to exercise their limbs, and make them pliant and nimble, strong and active on all occasions.

As to their *arms and hands*, they were formed, not to lie folded in the bosom, but to be engaged in some useful work; and sometimes, with due moderation, in robust and hardy exercise and toil; not so as to over-strain their joints, but to acquire firmness of strength by exercise.

AND more especially, they who are to get their bread by their hands, should be inured to toilsome and vigorous labours almost from their infancy: they should be accustomed to work in heat and cold, and to bear rougher exercises and fatigues of body, that they may be fit to endure hardships, and go through those difficulties which their station of life may call them to, without any injury or inconveniency. And it is desirable that the sons of all families should be in some degree inured to such difficulties as these, which men of all ranks are sometimes called to encounter.

IF some fond and tender mothers had brought up their children in this hardy manner, they had not now, in all human probability, been mourning over their graves. In their younger years they would  
scarcely



scarcely let them set the sole of their foot to the ground, nor suffer the wind to blow upon them: thus they grew up in a state of tenderness and infirmity, sickly and feeble creatures: a sudden heat or a cold seized them; their natures, which were never accustomed to bear hardship, were unable to resist the enemy; a fever kindled in their blood, or a catarrh or cough injured their lungs, and early buried their parents hopes in the dust.

THUS I have finished the *second general head of instruction*, that is, children should be instructed to *exercise and improve their natural powers*, both of *mind and body*: and this is one necessary part of a good education, which parents and other teachers should attend betimes.

### S E C T. III.

#### *Self-Government.*

CHILDREN should be instructed in the art of self-government. They should be taught, (as far as possible) to govern their thoughts: to use their wills to be determined by the light of their understandings, and not by head-strong and foolish humour; they should learn to keep the lower powers of  
of

of nature under the command of their *reason*: they should be instructed to regulate their *senses*, their *imagination*, their *appetites*, and their *passions*. Let it be observed that I speak of these things in this place, not as a part of religion, though they are an important part of it, but give it as a direction exceedingly useful to all the purposes of human life in this world.

1. *THEIR thoughts and fancies should be brought under early government.* Children should be taught, as far as possible, to keep their *thoughts* and *attention* fixed upon what is their proper business; and to withhold them from roving and wandering away from the work in which they are engaged. Many children have such wild fluttering fancies, that they will not be easily confined to fix upon one object for any considerable time: every flying feather, every motion of any person or thing that is near them, every sound, or noise, or shadow, calls them away from their duty. When they should employ their eyes on their book or their work, they will be gazing at every thing besides their task; they must rise often to the window to see what passes abroad, when their business lies within.

THIS volatile humour, if not gently altered and wisely corrected in early years, will have an unhappy influence to hinder them for ever from attaining any great excellence

cellence in whatsoever business they undertake. Children should be taught therefore to call in their wandering thoughts, and bind them to the work in hand, till they have gone through it and finished it.

YET this sort of wandering folly should not be chastized severely in young children, nor should it be subdued with violence, by too close and rigorous a confinement to many long hours of labour or study, in that early and tender part of life; such a conduct might break or overwhelm an active and sprightly genius, and destroy all those seeds of curiosity which promise well for maturer years: but proper and agreeable methods should be used to persuade and incline the young learner to attend to his present employment. It is far better to fix the thoughts to duty by allurements than by severity: but some way or other it ought to be endeavoured, at least in a good degree.

THIS fixedness of the mind and active powers, is not only of great service to attain useful knowledge, or to learn any business in common life, but it is of considerable advantage in religion, in attendance on divine worship, either prayer, preaching or meditation; where the mind is subject to a thousand distractions, for want of being taught to fix the attention in younger years. Persons who have well  
learned



learned the art of governing *their thoughts*, can pursue a train of thinking while they walk through the streets of *London*, nor will the noise and hurry of that busy place, break the thread of their meditations. A happy attainment this, and a felicity which but few arrive at !

2. CHILDREN should be also instructed to govern *their inclinations and wishes*, and to determine their wills and their choice of things, not by humour and wild fancy, but by the dictates of reason. Some persons, even in their mature years, can give no other account why they choose and determine to do this or that, but because they have a fancy for it, and they will do it. *I will because I will*, serves instead of all other reasons. And in the same manner they manage their refusal or dislike of any thing. *I hate to do this thing ; I will not go to this place, nor do that work ; I am resolved against it ;* and all from mere humour. This is a conduct very unbecoming a reasonable creature ; and this folly should be corrected betimes, in our early parts of life, since God has given us understanding and reason to be the guide of our resolutions, and to direct our choice and all our actions.

3. *APPETITE* is another thing which should be put under strict government, and children should be taught betimes to restrain it.



it. That of the *taste* is the first thing that gets the ascendant in our younger years, and a guard should be set upon it early. What an unbecoming thing is it for children to be craving after every dish that comes to a table? and that they will generally do, if they have never been taught to bridle their craving. They must eat of all the pickles and sauces and high seasoned meats, and gorge themselves with a medley of inconsistent dainties; and without any restraint, lest little *master* should be forward, or lest little *miss* should grow out of humour with her dinner. How often do they make a foul inroad on their health by excess of eating, being tempted farther than nature requires by every luscious bit which is within their sight? how frequently doth this indulgence vitiate their stomach, ruin their constitution, weaken the springs of nature, and destroy the powers of animal life betimes? how many graves are filled, and funeral vaults crowded with little carcases which have been brought to untimely death by the foolish fondness of a parent or a nurse, giving the young creatures leave to eat every thing they desire? or if they happen by strength of constitution to survive this pestilence, how often do they grow up young gluttons, and place their happiness in the satisfaction of the taste? they are deaf to all the rules  
of

of virtue and abstinence all their lives, because they were never taught to deny themselves when they were young. O it is a mean and shameful thing to be a slave to our taste, and to let this brutal appetite subdue reason and govern the man. But if appetites must be gratified in the child, they will grow strong in the years of youth, and a thousand to one but they over-power the man also.

LET but fond parents humour their little offspring, and indulge their children to sip wine frequently, and they will generally grow up to the love of it long before nature needs it; and by this means they will imagine drams are daily necessary for their support, by that time they are arrived at the age of man or woman. Thus nature is soon burnt up, and life pays for the deadly draught. The foundation of much gluttony and drunkenness, of many diseases that arise from intemperance, and of many an untimely death, is laid in the nursery.

AN *excess of niceness in pleasing the palate*, is a foolish and dangerous humour, which should never be encouraged by parents, since the plainest food is most healthful for all persons, but especially for children: and in this respect they should be under the conduct of their elders, and not always choose for themselves. This conduct  
and

and discipline will train them up to virtue and self-denial, to temperance and frugality, to a relish of plain and wholesome food, to the pleasures of active health, and to a firm and cheerful old age.

The indulgence of a nice appetite in children, is not only the reason why they are so often sick, but at the same time it makes them so humorous and squeamish, that they can scarcely be persuaded to swallow a medicine which is necessary for their recovery. What a long tedious and tiresome business is it to wait on some children whole hours together, while all the soft persuasions and flatteries of a mother cannot prevail with them to take a nauseous spoonful, or a bitter *bolus*, though their life may seem to depend on it? They have been taught to make an idol of their taste, and even in the view and peril of death, they can hardly be persuaded to affront their idol, and displease their palate with a draught, or even a pill, which disgusts it.

THERE are other *appetites* (if I may so call them) beside that of the *taste*, which children are ready to indulge too far, if not limited and corrected by the wisdom of their parents. *Their eyes are never satisfied with seeing, nor their ears with hearing.* Some young persons cannot hear of a fine show but they must needs see it: nor can they be told of a concert of music, but

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they



they must needs hear it, though it creates an expence beyond their circumstances, and may endanger their health or their virtue.

I CONFESS freely, that I would recommend the sight of uncommon things in nature or art, in government civil or military, to the curiosity of youth. If some strange wild beasts and birds are to be shown, if lions and eagles, ostriches and elephants, pelicans or rhinoceroses, are brought into our land, if an ingenious model of *Solomon's* temple, or some nice and admirable clock-work, engines, or moving pictures, &c. be made a spectacle to the ingenious; if a king be crowned, or a public triumph proceed through the streets; when an army is reviewed by a prince, when an ambassador makes a public entry, or when there is a public trial of criminals before a judge, I will readily allow these sights are worthy of the attendance of the younger parts of mankind; once at least, where it may be done with safety, and without too great hazard or expence. Most of these are things which are not often repeated, and it is fit that the curiosity of the eyes should be so far gratified, as to give people once in their lives an opportunity of knowing what these things are, that their minds may be furnished with useful ideas of the world of nature or art, and with some  
notion



notion of the great and uncommon scenes and appearances of the civil life. But for children to haunt every public spectacle, to attend with constancy every lord mayor's show, to seize every opportunity of repeating these sights, suffering nothing to escape them that may please their senses, and this too often without any regard to their religion, their virtue, or their health, this is a vanity which ought to be restrained by those to whom God and nature hath committed the care of their instruction, and who have a just and natural authority over them. But of this, and some other subjects akin to it, I may have occasion to speak more in the following parts of this discourse, when I professedly treat on the article of restraint.

THUS I have shown how the appetites and inclinations of children should be put under discipline, and how they may be taught *self-government* in this respect.

4. THE *passions* or *affections* are the last thing which I shall mention: these appear very early in children to want a regulation and government. They *love* and *hate* too rashly, and with too much vehemence; they *grieve* and *rejoice* too violently and on the sudden, and that for mere trifles; their *hopes* and *fears*, their *desires* and their *aversions*, are presently raised to too high a pitch, and upon very slight and insufficient grounds. It becomes a wise

parent to watch over these young emotions of their souls, and put in a word of prudent caution, as often as they observe these irregularities.

LET children be taught early, that the little things for which they are so *zealous*, for which they *grieve* or *rejoice* so impetuously, are not worthy of these affections of their souls; shew them the folly of being so *fond* of these trifles, and of *vexing* and *growing fretful* for the loss of them. Inform them what a happiness it is to have few *desires* and few *aversions*, for this will preserve them from a multitude of sorrows, and keep their temper always serene and calm: persuade them never to raise their *hopes* very high of things in this world, and then they will never meet with great disappointments. Teach them moderation in all these workings of their spirits; and inform them, that their passions should never be laid out thus on objects which do not deserve them, nor rise higher than the occasion requires.

TEACH bashful and timorous children, that they need be *ashamed* of nothing but what is evil; that they should *fear* God in the first place, and serve him, and then they need not be *afraid* of men, or of any thing that threatens mischief to them; for the Almighty God will be their friend and defence. Engage their fear and their  
love

love in the first place on God, the most proper and supreme object of them; let their hope, their joys and their sorrows, as soon as possible, be tinged with religion: set their young affections at work on the most needful and important objects of them in early life, and this will have a sweet and powerful influence on the better regulation of them with regard to all sensible things.

ABOVE all, let them know that they must govern their *anger*, and not let it break out on every slight occasion. It is *anger* that is eminently called *passion* among children, and in the language of common life. This therefore should eminently have a constant guard set upon it. Shew them how unreasonable and unmanly a thing it is to take fire at every little provocation: how honourable and glorious to forgive an injury; how much like God, and like the best of men. Let them know what *Solomon* would inform them, that *the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit: that he who is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, better than he that taketh a city.* Teach them to put away their little quarrels and resentments, and to forget and bury them in love. Let them be put in mind, that though *anger* may happen to rise a little in a good man, yet *it rests* and abides only *in the bosom*



*of a fool*; and therefore they should never grow fullen, *nor let the sun go down upon their wrath.*

THE occasions of childish resentment, and the risings of anger, are ready to return often, and therefore they should often have such warnings given them and such instructions repeated. Tell them how lovely a thing it is to be meek and free from passion, and how much such children are beloved of all. Instruct them how much it tends to their own peace, to suffer nothing to ruffle and discompose them: and when their little hearts are ready to swell and grow big within them, and their wrath takes sudden fire, put in some pretty soft word to cure the return of this inward swelling, to quench the new flame that is kindling in their bosom, and to assuage the rising storm. Teach them by degrees to get an habitual conquest over this disorder of nature in youth; and you will lay a foundation for their deliverance from a thousand mischiefs in the following years and events of life.

THIS shall suffice for the third head of *instruction*, which relates to *self-government*: I have dwelt the longer upon it, because it is of so great and evident importance towards the ease and happiness of life, as well as so considerable a part of religion; and men can hardly ever get so successful



cessful a victory over themselves, unless they begin when they are children.

## S E C T. IV.

*The common Arts of Reading and Writing.*

THE next thing that I shall mention as a matter of instruction for children, is the *common arts of reading, spelling, and writing.*

WRITING is almost a divine art, whereby thoughts may be communicated without a voice, and understood without hearing: to these I would add some small knowledge of *arithmetic or accounts*, as the practice of it is in a manner so universal in our age, that it does almost necessarily belong to a tolerable education.

THE knowledge of *letters*, is one of the greatest blessings that ever God bestowed on the children of men: by this means, mankind are enabled to preserve the memory of things done in their own times, and to lay up a rich treasure of knowledge for all succeeding generations.

By the *art of reading* we learn a thousand things which our eyes can never see, and which our own thoughts would never have reached to: we are instructed by books

in the wisdom of ancient ages ; we learn what our ancestors have said and done, and enjoy the benefit of the wise and judicious remarks which they have made through their whole course of life, without the fatigue of their long and painful experiments. By this means children may be led, in a great measure, into the wisdom of old age. It is by the *art of reading* that we can sit at home, and acquaint ourselves with what has been done in the distant parts of the world. The histories and the customs of all ages and all nations are brought, as it were, to our doors. By this art we are let into the knowledge of the affairs of the *Jews*, the *Greeks*, and the *Romans*, their wars, their laws, and their religion ; and we can tell what they did in the nations of *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africa*, above a thousand years ago.

BUT the greatest blessing that we derive from *reading*, is the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, wherein God has conveyed down to us the discoveries of his wisdom, power and grace, through many past ages ; and whereby we attain the knowledge of *Christ*, and of the way of salvation by a mediator.

IT must be confessed that in former ages, before *printing* was invented, the *art of reading* was not so common even in polite nations, because books were much more costly, since they must be all written with  
a pen,

a pen, and were therefore hardly to be obtained by the bulk of mankind: but since the providence of God has brought *printing* into the world, and knowledge is so plentifully diffused through our nation at so cheap a rate, it is a pity that any children should be born and brought up in *Great-Britain* without the *skill of reading*; and especially since by this means, every one may see with his own eyes, what God requires of him in order to eternal happiness.

THE *art of writing* also is so exceedingly useful, and is now grown so very common, that the greatest part of children may attain it at an easy rate: by this means we communicate our thoughts and all our affairs to our friends at ever so great a distance: we tell them our wants, our sorrows, and our joys, and interest them in our concerns, as though they were near us. We maintain correspondence and traffic with persons in distant nations, and the wealth and grandeur of *Great-Britain* is maintained by this means. By the *art of writing*, we treasure up all things that concern us in a safe repository; and as often as we please, by consulting our paper records, we renew our remembrance of things that relate to this life or the life to come: and why should any of the children of men be debarred from this privilege, if it may be attained at a cheap and easy rate, without intrenching  
upon



upon other duties of life, and without omitting any more necessary business that may belong to their station?

I MIGHT add here also, *true spelling* is such a part of knowledge as children ought to be acquainted with, since it is a matter of shame and ridicule in so polite an age as ours, when persons who have learned to handle the pen cannot write three words together without a mistake or blunder; and when they put letters together in such an awkward and ignorant manner, that it is hard to make sense of them, or to tell what they mean.

*ARITHMETIC*, or the *art of numbers* is, as was observed before, to be reckoned also a necessary part of a good education. Without some degrees of this knowledge, there is indeed no traffic among men. And especially is it more needful at present, since the world deals much more upon trust and credit than it did in former times; and therefore the art of keeping accounts is made, in some measure, necessary to persons even in meaner stations of life, below the rank of merchants or great traders. A little knowledge of the art of accounts is also needful, in some degree, in order to take a true survey, and make a just judgment of the common expences of a person or a family: but this part of learning, in the various degrees of it, is  
more



more or less useful and needful, according to the different stations and businesses for which children are designed.

As the sons of a family should be educated in the knowledge of *writing, reading, spelling and accounts*, so neither should the daughters be trained up without them. *Reading* is as needful for one sex as the other; or should girls be forbidden to handle the *pen* or to cast up a few figures, since it may be very much for their advantage in almost all circumstances of life, except in the very lowest rank of servitude or hard labour. And I beg leave here to intreat the female youth, especially those of better circumstances in the world, to maintain their skill in *writing* which they have already learned, by taking every occasion to exercise it: and I would fain persuade them to take pains in acquainting themselves with *true spelling*, the want of which is one reason why many of them are ashamed to *write*; and they are not ashamed to own and declare this, as though it were a just and sufficient excuse for neglecting and losing the use of the pen.

## S E C T. V.

*Of a Trade or Employment.*

**I**N a good education it is required also that children, in the common ranks of life, be brought up to the *knowledge of some proper business or employment for their lives; some trade or traffic, artifice or manufacture*, by which they may support their expences, and procure for themselves the necessaries of life, and by which they may be enabled to provide for their families in due time. In some of the *eastern* nations, even persons of the highest rank are obliged to be educated in some employment or profession; and perhaps that practice has many advantages in it: it engages their younger years in labour and diligence, and secures from the mischievous effects of sloth, idleness, vanity, and a thousand temptations.

IN our nation I confess it is a custom to educate the children of noblemen, and the eldest sons of the gentry, to no proper business or profession, but only to an acquaintance with some of the ornaments and accomplishments of life, which I shall mention immediately. But perhaps it would be

far happier for some families, if the sons were brought up to business, and kept to the practice of it, than to have them exposed to the pernicious inconveniencies of a sauntering and idle life, and the more violent impulse of all the corrupt inclinations of youth.

HOWEVER, it is certain that far the greater part of mankind must bring up their children to some regular business and profession, whereby they may sustain their lives and support a family, and become useful members to the state. Now in the choice of such a profession or employment for children, many things are to be consulted,

(1.) *THE circumstances and estate of the parent*; whether it will reach to place out the child as an apprentice, to provide for him materials for his business or trade, and to support him till he shall be able to maintain himself by his profession. Sometimes the ambition of the parent and the child, hath fixed on a trade far above their circumstances; in consequence of which the child hath been exposed to many inconveniencies, and the parent to many sorrows.

(2.) *THE capacity and talents of the child must also be considered.* If it be a profession of hard labour; hath the child a healthy and firm constitution, and strength of body equal to the work? If it be a profession

profession that requires the exercise of fancy, skill and judgment, or much study and contrivance; then the question will be, hath the lad a genius capable of thinking well, a bright imagination, a solid judgment? Is he able to endure such an application of mind as is necessary for the employment?

(3.) *THE temper and inclination of the child, must be brought into this consultation, in order to determine a proper business for life. If the daily labour and business of a man be not agreeable to him, he can never hope to manage it with any great advantage or success. I knew a bricklayer, who professed that he had always an aversion to the smell of mortar: and I was acquainted once with a lad who begun to learn Greek at school, but he complained it did not agree with his constitution. I think the first of these ought to have been brought up to work in glass or timber, or any thing rather than in bricks: as for the other, (to my best remembrance) he was wisely disposed of to a calling wherein he had nothing to do with Greek.*

AND here I would beg leave to desire, that none might be encouraged to pursue any of the learned professions, that is, *divinity, law, or physic*, who have not the signs of a good genius, who are not patient of long attention and close application to study,



study, who have not a peculiar delight in that profession which they choose, and withal a pretty firm constitution of body ; for *much study is a weariness to the flesh*, and the vigour of nature is sooner impaired by laborious thoughtfulness than by the labour of the limbs.

(4.) IT should be also the solicitous and constant care of parents, when they place out their children in the world, to seek out masters for them who profess serious religion, who practise all moral virtues, and keep good orders and good hours in their family. The neglect of this concern, has been the ruin of a thousand youths in our day ; and notwithstanding the sensible mischief arising from this negligence, yet there is still too little care taken in a matter of so great importance \*.

THUS much for this part of the *education of sons*. But you will say then, what business of life must daughters be brought up to? I must confess when I have seen so many of this sex, who have lived well in the

\* This danger arises in a great degree from the immoderate love of pleasures, that so generally prevails, and leads masters into parties and engagements, especially on the Lord's-day ; which not only occasions the neglect of religious instruction and family prayer on the evening of it, but sets an example to servants which they think themselves authorized to follow, though it be generally to their own destruction.

the time of their childhood, grievously exposed to many hardships and poverty upon the death of their parents. I have often wished there were more of the callings or employments of life peculiarly appropriated to *women*, and that they were regularly educated in them, that there might be a better provision made for their support. What if all the garments which are worn by women, were so limited and restrained in the manufacture of them, that they should all be made only by their own sex? This would go a great way toward relief in this case: and what if some of the easier labours of life were reserved for them only? But this is not my province.

HOWEVER it may be as to this matter, it is the custom of the nation, and indeed it hath been the custom of most nations and ages, to *educate daughters* in the knowledge of things that relate to the affairs of the household, to spin and to use the needle, both for making garments and for the ornaments of embroidery: they have been generally employed in the preparation of food, in the regular disposal of the affairs of the house for the conveniencies and accommodations of human life, in the furniture of the rooms, and the elegancies of entertainment. *Sarah made ready three measures of meal and kneaded it, and made cakes upon the hearth, Gen. xviii. 6.* And the women  
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*of Israel that were wise-hearted, did spin with their hands, both blue and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, for the tabernacle, Exod. xxxv. 25. Women shall bake your bread, Lev. xxvi. 16. Women sew pillows and make kerchiefs, Ezek. xiii. 18.* which words, though perhaps they are a metaphor in that text, yet denote the office or work of women. And *Dorcas made coats and garments for the poor, Acts ix. 36, 39.* I might cite many ancient heathen authors to prove the same thing among the *Greeks and Romans*, if it were needful.

SOME of these things are the constant labours and cares of women in our day, whereby they maintain themselves: the most laborious parts of them belong to the poor. And it is the opinion of the best judges, that, even in superior and wealthy circumstances, every daughter should be so far instructed in them, as to know when they are performed aright, that the servant may not usurp too much power, and impose on the ignorance of the mistress. Nature and Providence seem to have designed these offices for the sex in all ages and in all nations, because while the men are engaged in harder and more robust labours, and are often called abroad on business, the women are more generally accustomed to keep house and dwell at home; and the word of God as well as the custom of hu-

man life recommends it. *Tit. ii. 5. 1 Tim. v. 14.*

## S E C T. VI.

### *Rules of Prudence.*

**A**LL children should have some instruction given them *in the conduct of human life, some necessary rules of prudence*, by which they may regulate the management of their own affairs, and their behaviour towards their fellow-creatures. Where all other sorts of knowledge are conferred upon children, if this be wanting, they make but a contemptible figure in the world, and plunge themselves into many inconveniencies.

SOME of these *rules of prudence* are of a *general* nature, and necessary at all times, and upon all occasions: others are more *particular*, and proper to be used according to the various occurrences of life.

IF I were to enquire what are the *foundations of human prudence*, I should rank them under these three heads.

1. *A knowledge of ourselves.* Here every one should be taught to consider within himself, what is my temper and natural inclination; what are my most powerful appetites



tites and my prevailing passions ; what are my chief talents and capacities, if I have any at all ; what are the weakneses and follies to which I am most liable, especially in the days of youth ; what are the temptations and dangers that attend me ; what are my circumstances in the world ; and what my various relations to mankind round about me ; what are my constant, and what my occasional duties ; what are the inward or outward advantages that attend me, or the disadvantages under which I labour. A wise and just survey of all these things, and keeping them always in mind, will be of unspeakable use to us in the conduct of life, that we may set our chief guard upon our weak side, and where our greatest dangers lie ; that we may employ our talents aright, and seize all advantages to improve them for the best purpose, and proceed in the shortest way to piety, usefulness and peace.

2. *THE knowledge of mankind* is also necessary to acquire prudence. And here young persons should not only be taught what is the general nature and capacity, the virtues and the vices, and the follies of mankind ; but they should be informed also, or at least should be taught to observe more particularly, what are the peculiar tempers, appetites, passions, powers, good and evil qualities of the persons with whom

they have most to do in the world ; that they may learn to behave wisely with regard to others, and that they may make a proper improvement of all the brighter and darker characters which they observe amongst men, both for their own advantage and for the benefit of their fellow-creatures. This may have a happy influence to lead them to avoid the vices and follies which have plunged others into mischief, to imitate the virtues of those who have behaved well in life, and to secure themselves from many dangers and miseries, as well as to pity the weaknesses and sorrows of mankind, and afford them a willing and cheerful relief.

3. *THE knowledge of the things of the world, and the various affairs of human life,* must be included as one of the chief foundations of *prudence*. It would be endless to run over particulars of this kind ; but in a special manner young persons should apply themselves to know those things which most nearly concern them, and which have the most immediate relation to their own business and duty, to their own interest and welfare : and it is a valuable part of wisdom to neglect other things, and not to waste our time and spirits in them, when they stand in any competition with our proper and most important work, whether we consider ourselves as men or as christians.

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SOLOMON tells us, Eccles. iii. 1, 17. and viii. 5, 6. *There is both time and judgment for every work, and for every purpose under the heaven: and that a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment; that is, he judgeth well concerning what is to be done, and the time when to do it: and therefore the misery of man is great upon him, because he knows not this time and judgment, he doth neither discern what is proper to be done, nor the proper season of doing it. Prudence consists in judging well what is to be said, and what is to be done, on every new occasion; when to lie still and when to be active; when to keep silence and when to speak; what to avoid and what to pursue; how to act in every difficulty; what means to make use of to compass such an end; how to behave in every circumstance of life, and in all companies; how to gain the favour of mankind in order to promote our own happiness, and to do the most service to God and the most good to men, according to that station we possess, and those opportunities which we enjoy.*

For this purpose there is no book better than the *Proverbs of Solomon*. Several of the first chapters seem to be written for young men, under the name of *Solomon's son*: and all the rest of them should be made familiar to youth by their frequent converse with

them, and treasuring them up in their head and heart.

AMONG human writings of this kind, perhaps the book called *Ecclesiasticus*, though it be among the *apocryphal* writings, is equal to the best of the ancients. And among the moderns, I know not a better collection than the little book of *Directions, Counsels and Advices*, lately published by Dr. Fuller for the use of his son; though I could wish he had rendered it universally acceptable to all readers, by avoiding some severities on the other sex; and that he had spared his little railleries on the name of *saints*, though those offensive sentences are but few.

## S E C T. VII.

*The Ornaments and Accomplishments of Life.*

THE last part of *instruction* which I include in the idea of a good education, is an *instruction of youth in some of the useful ornaments and accomplishments of life*.

IT has been the custom of our nation, for persons of the middle and the lower ranks of life, who design their children for trades and manufactures, to send them to the *La-*



*tin* and *Greek* schools. There they wear out four or five years of time in learning a number of strange words, that will be of very little use to them in all the following affairs of their station: and this very learning also, is generally taught in a very tiresome and most irrational method, when they are forced to learn *Latin* by Grammars and rules written in that unknown tongue. When they leave the school they usually forget what they have learned, and the chief advantage they gain by it, is to spell and pronounce hard words better when they meet them in *English*: whereas this skill of *spelling* might be attained in a far shorter time and at an easier rate by other methods\*, and much of life might be saved and improved to better purposes.

As for the sons of those who enjoy more plentiful circumstances in the world, they may be instructed in the *Latin* and *Greek* languages for several valuable ends in their station: and especially those who design the learned professions, ought thoroughly to understand them: and such as pursue the study of *divinity* must be acquainted also with *Hebrew* and *Chaldee*, that they may read the Old Testament in its original language as well as the New.

THE *French* is now-a-days esteemed also an accomplishment to both sexes. If they

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\* See my *Art of Reading and Writing*, chap. 21.

have time enough, which they know not how to employ better, and a good memory, I would not forbid it. There are several good books written in that language which are not unworthy of our perusal: and there are many words now introduced in the *English* language, borrowed and derived from thence, as well as from the *Latin* and *Greek*; so that it may not be improper for an *English* gentleman to learn these tongues, that he may understand his own the better. I add also, that if persons have much acquaintance with the *French* nation, or have occasion to converse with foreigners at court or in the city, or if they design to travel abroad, the *French* is a necessary tongue, because it is so much spoken in *Europe*, and especially in courts. But otherwise, there are so many of the valuable writings of *French* authors perpetually translated into *English*, that it is a needless thing to go through much difficulty or take much pains in attaining it. I am inclined to believe that, (except in the cases above-mentioned) few have found the profit answer the labour. As for those persons who are bred up to traffic with other nations, they must necessarily learn the language of those nations; and this I reckon not among their accomplishments, but consider it as rather a part of their proper business in life.

IN short, it is a thing of far greater value and importance, that youth should be perfectly well skilled in reading, writing and speaking their native tongue in a proper, a polite and graceful manner, than in toiling among foreign languages. It is of more worth and advantage to gentlemen and ladies to have an exact knowledge of what is decent, just and elegant in *English*, than to be a critic in foreign tongues. The very knowledge of foreign words should be improved to this purpose: and in order to obtain this accomplishment, they should frequently converse with those persons and books which are esteemed polite and elegant in their kind.

THUS far concerning the knowledge of *words*. But the knowledge of *things* is of much more importance.

1. THE young gentry of both sexes should be a little acquainted with *logic*, that they may learn to obtain clear ideas; to judge by reason and the nature of things; to banish the prejudices of infancy, custom and humour; to argue closely and justly on any subject; and to cast their thoughts and affairs into a proper and easy method.

2. SEVERAL parts of *mathematical* learning are also necessary ornaments of the mind; and not without real advantage: and many of these are so agreeable to the fancy, that



youth will be entertained and pleased in acquiring the knowledge of them.

BESIDES the common *skill in accounts* which is needful for a trader, there is a variety of pretty and useful rules and practices in *arithmetic*, to which a gentleman should be no stranger: and if his genius lie that way, a little insight into *algebra* would be no disadvantage to him. It is fit that young people of any figure in the world, should see some of the springs and clues whereby skilful men, by plain rules of reason, trace out the most deep, distant, and hidden questions; and whereby they find certain answers to those enquiries, which at first view seem to lie without the ken of mankind, and beyond the reach of human knowledge. It was for want of a little more general acquaintance with mathematical learning in the world, that a good *algebraist* and a *geometer* were counted conjurers a century ago, and people applied to them to seek for lost horses and stolen goods.

THEY should know something of *geometry*, so far at least as to understand the names of the various lines and angles, surfaces and solids: to know what is meant by a right line or a curve, a right angle and an oblique, whether acute or obtuse: how the quantity of angles is measured, what is a circle, a semicircle, an arch, a quadrant,



quadrant, a degree and minute, a diameter and radius: what we mean by a triangle, a square, a parallelogram, a polygon, a cube, a pyramid, a prism, a cone, an ellipsis or oval, an hyperbola, a parabola, &c. and to know some of the most general properties of angles, triangles, squares, and circles, &c. The world is now grown so learned in *mathematical* science, that this sort of language is often used in common writings and in conversation, far beyond what it was in the days of our fathers. And besides, without some knowledge of this kind, we cannot make any farther progress towards an acquaintance with the arts of *surveying, measuring, geography* and *astronomy*, which are so entertaining and so useful an accomplishment to persons of a polite education.

*GEOGRAPHY* and *astronomy* are exceedingly delightful studies. The knowledge of the lines and circles of the globes, of heaven and earth, is counted so necessary in our age, that no person of either sex is now esteemed to have had an elegant education without it. Even tradesmen and the actors in common life should, in my opinion, in their younger years, learn something of these sciences, instead of vainly wearing out seven years of drudgery in *Greek* and *Latin*.

IT is of considerable advantage as well as delight for mankind, to know a little of the *earth* on which they dwell, and of the *stars and skies* that surround them on all sides. It is almost necessary for young persons (who pretend to any thing of instruction and schooling above the lowest rank of people) to get a little acquaintance with the several parts of the *land and the sea*, that they may know in what quarter of the world the chief cities and countries are situated; that at the mention of the word *Copenhagen*, they may not grossly blunder and expose themselves, (as a certain gentleman once did) by supposing it to be the name of a *Dutch* commander. Without this knowledge we cannot read any history with profit, nor so much as understand the common news-papers.

IT is necessary also to know something of the *heavenly bodies*, and their various motions and periods of revolution, that we may understand the accounts of time in past ages, and the histories of ancient nations, as well as know the reasons of day and night, summer and winter, and the various appearances and places of the moon and other planets. Then we shall not be terrified at every eclipse, or presage, and foretell public desolations at the sight of a comet: we shall see the sun covered with darkness, and the full moon deprived of her light,

light, without foreboding imaginations that the government is in danger, or that the world is come to an end. This will not only increase rational knowledge, and guard us against foolish and ridiculous fears, but it will amuse the mind most agreeably; and it has a most happy tendency to raise in our thoughts the noblest and most magnificent ideas of God by the survey of his works, in their surprising grandeur and divine artifice.

3. *NATURAL philosophy*, at least in the more general principles and foundations of it, should be infused into the minds of youth. This is a very bright ornament of our rational natures, which are inclined to be inquisitive into the causes and reasons of things. A course of philosophical experiments, is now frequently attended by the ladies as well as gentlemen, with no small pleasure and improvement. God and religion may be better known, and clearer ideas may be obtained of the amazing wisdom of our creator, and of the glories of the life to come, as well as of the things of this life, by the rational learning and the knowledge of nature that is now so much in vogue. If I were to recommend a book or two on this subject, which may usefully be read by the ladies as well as gentlemen, I know none better than Mr. Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*, Dr. Derham's *Discourses*



courses on the same subject, the Archbishop of *Cambray's* Treatise of the Existence of God, at least to the fiftieth Section, *Nieu-nenteit's* Religious Philosophiehr, and Dr. *Matther's* Christian Philosopher. These things will enlarge and refine the understanding, improve the judgment, and bring the faculty of reasoning into a juster exercise, even upon all manner of subjects.

4. *HISTORY* is another accomplishment of youth and ornament of education. The narratives of the various occurrences in nations, as well as in the lives of particular persons, slide into younger minds with pleasure. These will furnish the soul in time with a treasure of knowledge, whence to derive useful observations, inferences and rules of conduct. These will enable us to gratify our acquaintance, by rehearsing such narrations at proper seasons, and render our own company agreeable and useful to mankind.

5. NOR can our education be called completely elegant without something of *poesy*, in so very polite an age as this.

WHILE I mention some knowledge of *poesy* as a proper ornament of youth, I would not be understood as though I recommended *verse-making* to every young gentleman and lady. It is an old proverb, that *poets are born, and not made*. And though I have been too far betrayed by an unguarded inclination,



inclination, into attempts of this kind in some of my former years, yet, while I sometimes repent of having laid out so many days and hours of a short life in writing verses, I will not encourage others to practise it, unless they are blest with a brighter genius, and find an insuperable bent and bias of soul that way: and even then, let it be a diversion and not a business.

THE thing therefore which I here recommend to persons of a polite education, is some acquaintance with good verse. To read it in the best authors, to learn to know, and taste, and feel a fine stanza, as well as hear it, and to treasure up some of the richest sentiments and expressions of the most admired writers, is all that I mean in this advice.

NOR is this a mere amusement or useless embroidery of the mind. It brightens and animates the fancy with a thousand beautiful images, it enriches the soul with many great and sublime sentiments and refined ideas, it fills the memory with a noble variety of language, and furnishes the tongue with speech and expression suited to every subject. It teaches the art of describing well, and of painting every thing to the life, and dressing up all the pleasing and the frightful scenes of nature and providence, vice and virtue, in their proper charms and horrors. It assists us in the  
art

art of persuasion, it leads us into a pathetic manner of speech and writing, and adds life and beauty to conversation.

How often have we been enabled to gild a gloomy hour of life, and to soften a rough and painful occurrence, by meditating and repeating the lines of some great poet? Between the colours and the harmony that belong to verse, our senses and our souls are sometimes sweetly entertained in a solitary retirement; and sometimes we entertain our friends agreeably, we regale them as with music and painting at once, and gladden the whole company.

BUT *poetry* hath still some sublimer powers. It raises our dying religion to a heavenly degree, and kindles a flame of holy love and joy in the heart. If the memory be well stored with devout songs, we shall never be at a loss for divine meditation: we may exalt the praises of God and our Saviour at all times, and feel our souls borne up as on the wings of angels, far above this dusky globe of earth, till we have lost all its flattering vanities and its painful vexations. Poesy was first designed for the service of religion, and dedicated to the Temple. *Moses* and *David* made divine and illustrious use of it. The royal psalmist is raised on the wing of inspiration and sacred verse, far above the level of the *Jewish* ceremonies and shadows, and converses  
with

with heavenly things, and sheds abroad the glories of the future *Messiah*, amidst the raptures of his sublime and inimitable poesy.

BUT it is time to descend, and mention some of the *accomplishments of animal nature*. The first of this kind, and perhaps the nearest to *poesy*, is the *art of singing*. A most charming gift of the God of nature, and designed for the solace of our sorrows and the improvement of our joys. Those young persons who are blest with a musical ear and voice, should have some instruction bestowed on them, that they may acquire this delightful skill. I am sorry that the greatest part of our songs, whereby young gentlemen and ladies are taught to practise this art, are of the amorous kind, and some of them polluted too. Will no happy genius lend a helping hand to rescue music from all its defilements, and to furnish the tongue with a nobler and more refined melody? But *singing* must not be named alone.

VARIOUS *harmony both of the wind and string* were once in use in divine worship, and that by divine appointment. It is certain then, that the use of these instruments in common life is no unlawful practice, though the New Testament has not ordained the use of it in evangelical worship. But if the voice be happily capable of this art, it is preferable to all instruments fashioned



and composed by man: this is an organ formed and tuned by God himself. It is most easily kept in exercise, the skill is retained longest, and the pleasure transcends all the rest. Where an ode of noble and seraphic composition is set throughout to music and sung by an artful voice, while the spirit at the same time enjoys a devout temper, the joys of the soul and the sense are united, and it approaches to the scriptural ideas of the celestial state. Happy the youth who has a bright and harmonious constitution, with a pious turn of soul, a cheerful spirit, and a relish of sacred melody! He takes a frequent flight above this lower world, beyond the regions of sense and time; he joins the concert of the heavenly inhabitants, and seems to anticipate the business and the blessedness of eternity.

SHALL I be allowed after this, to mention *drawing* and *painting* as agreeable amusements of polite youth? Where the genius leads that way it is a noble diversion, and improves the mind. Nature has her share in this as well as in *poesy*; where nature inclines, let polite youth be taught to sketch a little on paper; let them have at least some taste of these arts, some capacity of being pleased with a curious draught, a noble painting, an elegant statue, and fine resemblances of nature. This is an ingenious  
and



and a graceful acquirement. Mr. *Richardson's* Essay on the Theory of Painting, is the best book that I know on that subject; and sufficient to give a young gentleman a general knowledge of the art.

SHALL I now name the art of *fencing* and of *riding the managed horse*, as an accomplishment for gentlemen? These are exercises of a healthy kind, and may be useful in human life. Shall I speak of *dancing*, as a modish accomplishment of both sexes? I confess, I know no evil in it. This also is a healthful exercise, and it gives young persons a decent manner of appearance in company. It may be profitable to some good purposes, if it be well guarded against all the abuses and temptations that may attend it. It was used of old in sacred and civil rejoicing *Exod.* xv. 20, 21. *2 Sam.* vi. 14. *1 Sam.* xviii. 6. It is certainly an advantage to have the body formed early to graceful motion, to which the art of dancing may have contributed. But where it is much beloved and indulged, it has most sensible dangers, especially mixed dancing. It leads youth too often and too early into company; it may create too much forwardness and assurance in the sex, whose chief glory is their modesty; it may kindle vain and vicious inclinations, and raise in young minds too great a fondness for the excessive gaieties and licentious pleasures of the age.

IN all these affairs a wise parent will keep a watchful eye upon the child, while he indulges it in these gratifications of youth and inclination: a wise parent will daily observe, whether the son or the little daughter begin to be too much charmed with any of the gay ornaments and amusements of life; and, with a prudent and sacred solicitude, will take care lest any of them entrench on the more necessary and more important duties of life and religion. And according to this view of things, the parent's hand will either give a looser rein to the pursuit of these exercises, or will manage the propensities of the child with a needful and becoming restraint.

BUT among all the accomplishments of youth, there is none preferable to a decent and agreeable behaviour among men, a modest freedom of speech, a soft and elegant manner of address, a graceful and lovely deportment, a cheerful gravity and good humour, with a mind appearing ever serene under the ruffling accidents of human life: add to this, a pleasing solemnity and reverence when the discourse turns upon any thing sacred and divine, a becoming neglect of injuries, a hatred of calumny and slander, a habit of speaking well of others, a pleasing benevolence and readiness to do good to mankind, and special compassion to the miserable; with an air  
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and countenance, in a natural and unaffected manner, expressive of all these excellent qualifications.

SOME of these, I own, are to be numbered among the *duties* and *virtues*, rather than among the *ornaments* of mankind: but they must be confessed to be *ornaments* as well as *virtues*. They are *graces* in the eye of man as well as of God. These will bespeak the affection of all that know us, and engage even an ill-natured world betimes in our favour. These will enable the youth of both sexes, who are so happy to attain them, to enter upon the stage of life with approbation and love, to pass through the world with ease (as far as ease may be expected in so degenerate and unhappy a state of things) to finish the scenes of action on earth with applause, and to leave behind them the monument of a good name, when their bodies sleep in the dust, and their souls dwell with God.

## S E C T. VIII.

*A Guard against evil Influences from Persons and Things.*

**I**T belongs also to a good education, that children be guarded and secured (as far as possible) from all evil influences and unhappy impressions, which they may be exposed to receive both from persons and things. I shall sufficiently explain this direction by particular instances.

LET not nurses or servants be suffered to fill their minds with *silly tales and with senseless rhimes*, many of which are so absurd and ridiculous, that they will not bear to be represented in a grave discourse. The imagination of young creatures is hereby flattered and deceived: their reason is grossly abused and imposed upon: and by this means they are trained up to be amused with follies and nonsense, rather than to exercise their understanding, which is the glory of human nature.

LET not any persons that are near them terrify their tender minds with dismal *stories of witches and ghosts, of devils and evil spirits, of fairies and bugbears in the dark*. This hath had a most mischievous effect on  
some



some children, and hath fixed in their constitutions such a rooted slavery and fear, that they have scarcely dared to be left alone all their lives, especially in the night. These stories have made such a deep and frightful impression on their tender fancies, that it hath enervated their souls, it hath broken their spirits early, it hath grown up with them, and mingled with their religion, it hath laid a wretched foundation for melancholy and distracting sorrows. Let these sort of informations be reserved for their firmer years, and let them not be told in their hearing, till they can better judge what truth or reality there is in them, and be made sensible how much is owing to romance and fiction.

NOR let their little hearts be frightened at three or four years old with *shocking and bloody histories, with massacres and martyrdoms, with cuttings and burnings, with the images of horrible and barbarous murders, with racks and red hot pincers, with engines of torment and cruelty, with mangled limbs, and carcases drenched in gore.* It is time enough, when their spirits are grown a little firmer, to acquaint them with these madneses and miseries of human nature. There is no need that the history of the holy confessors and martyrs should be set before their thoughts so early in all their most ghastly shapes and colours. These things, when

they are a little older, may be of excellent use to discover to them the wicked and bloody principles of persecution, both among the *Heathens* and the *Papists*; and to teach them the power of the grace of *Christ*, in supporting these poor sufferers under all the torments which they sustained for the love of God and the truth.

LET their ears be ever kept from all *immodest stories*, and from *wanton songs*: from *riddles and puns with double meanings and foul intentions*: let them not be suffered to read *wanton jests or amorous romances*: and due care should be taken to remove all books out of their way that may defile their imagination, or teach them the language or the sentiments of impurity. Nor let their eyes be entertained with *lewd and unclean pictures*, and *images of things or actions that are not fit to be exposed*. These things indeed have too often an unhappy influence to corrupt the fancy and the manners; and in riper years have been the occasion of numberless mischiefs: but especially they should be kept far away from the sight or hearing of children, lest too deep and dangerous impressions be made in those early years of life. Nothing but what is chaste, pure and innocent, should come within the reach of their eyes and ears. Even the common necessities and actions of nature, should be always expressed before them in  
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the most modest forms of speech that our mother-tongue can furnish us with. In this respect, (as the poet says) children should be treated with great reverence.

*Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.*

IT is confessed that books of anatomy, and other parts of necessary science, are proper to be written; and these may be consulted by persons who are grown up to a due age, especially by those whose profession requires it. There is also some necessity of foul narratives, where foul crimes are committed, and ought to be publicly exposed and brought to justice and punishment. As the affairs of mankind stand, these things cannot always be avoided: but there is no manner of necessity that children should read them, or rash unguarded youth.

FOR some of the reasons before-mentioned, there should be a wise conduct in shewing children what parts of the Bible they should read: for though the word of God expresseth all things with due decency, yet there are some things which have been found necessary to be spoken of in scripture, both in the laws of *Moses* and in the representation of the wickedness of the *Gentiles* in the New Testament; in which adult persons have been concerned, which there is no necessity for children to read and hear,  
and



and they may be passed over or omitted among them. The *Jews* were wont to withhold *Solomon's Song* from their children till they were thirty years old: and the late pious and prudent bishop *Tillotson* (in a manuscript which I have seen) wishes that those parts of the Bible wherein there are some of the affairs of mankind expressed *too naturally* (as he calls it) were omitted in the public lessons of the church: I think they may as well be excepted also out of the common lessons of children, and out of the daily course of reading in family worship.

LET parents take as much care as they can, in the *choice of companions and play-fellows* for their sons and their daughters. It would be a happy thing if children, who are bred up in schools, could be secured from the company and evil influence of other children, who curse and swear, who take the name of God in vain, and use filthy and unclean language. Masters and mistresses should be very watchful and strict in their enquiries into the behaviour of their scholars of both sexes when they are out of their sight, that if it were possible there might not be one among them whose lips are impure or profane: for one diseased sheep may infect the whole flock. However, where children find such immorality practised by any of their fellows, they should be taught to shew their utmost abhorrence



rence of it, and speedily forsake such pernicious company.

## S E C T. IX.

### *A Guard set on the Sports and Diversions of Children.*

AS parents should take care to have their children employed in proper learning and business, so they should not think it beneath them to *concern themselves a little about their sports and recreations.* Human nature, especially in younger years, cannot be constantly kept intent on work, learning or labour. There must be some intervals of pleasure to give a loose to the mind, and to refresh the natural spirits. Too long and intense a confinement to one thing, is ready to over-tire the spirits of youth, and to weaken the springs of activity by excessive fatigue. It is an old simile on this occasion, and a very just one, that a bow kept always bent will grow feeble and lose its force. The alternate successions of business and diversion, preserve the body and soul of children in the happiest temper : and learning is more closely pursued, and work better done after some agreeable relaxations. The young creatures ap-  
ply

ply themselves to their business with new vigour, after the enjoyment of some pleasurable release.

I CONFESS it would be a considerable advantage, if the various parts of learning and business in which children are employed, were so happily contrived, that one might be as it were a relaxation or diversion, when the mind is tired with the other: And if the children have a taste and relish of reading and improvement of the mind, there is a rich variety of entertainment to be found in books of poetry, history, accounts of the wonders of art and nature, as well as ingenious practices in mechanical and mathematical affairs. It is happiest indeed, where this relish is the gift of nature; yet children may be trained up by wise and alluring methods, to delight in knowledge, and to choose such sort of recreations, especially in winter nights and rainy seasons, when they cannot enjoy the more active diversions abroad. Yet besides these, some other sorts of sports will generally be found necessary for children of almost all dispositions.

AND their sports ought to be such as are in some measure chosen by themselves, that they may be matter of delight, yet still under the regulation of the eye and prudence of a parent. No sort of play should be permitted, wherein sacred things become a  
matter

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matter of jest or merriment. No sport should be indulged wherein foul language, ill names or scandal are practised; wherein there is any violation of modesty, or of the rules of decency and cleanliness; nothing must be suffered wherein there is any breach of the moral precepts of the law of God; wherein cozening or cheating, falsehood or lying, are practised or allowed. They should be confined to honesty, justice, truth and goodness, even in their very play.

THEY should not be permitted to use such sporting as may tend to discompose their spirits, disorder their nature, injure their flesh, prejudice their health, break their limbs, or do mischief to themselves, or each other. This should rather be the play of dogs or horses than of children.

NOR should they ever be allowed to practise those diversions that carry an idea of barbarity and cruelty in them, though it be but to brute creatures. They should not set up *cocks* to be banged with cudgels thrown at them about *shrove-tide*; nor delight in giving a tedious lingering death to a young litter of *dogs* or *cats*, that may be appointed to be destroyed and drowned, lest they multiply too much in a house: nor should they take pleasure in pricking, cutting or mangling young *birds* which they have caught, nor using any savage and bloody practices

practices towards any creatures whatsoever; lest their hearts grow hard and unrelenting, and they learn in time to practise these cruelties on their own kind, and to murder and torture their fellow-mortals; or at least to be indifferent to their pain and distress, so as to occasion it without remorse.

THEY should never be suffered to game for money, nor even for their own toys or play-things if they are costly and expensive: many sore inconveniencies in riper years, arise from such indulgences. And indeed no recreations should be accounted lawful, but those in which they can with courage recommend themselves to God, and desire his blessing upon them.

THOSE children who are kept pretty close to learning in a school, should be directed to pursue their recreations, as much as may be, in the open air; and to exercise their limbs with vigour and activity, that their growth and health may not be impaired by study, and too much confinement to a book. But in very foul weather, or in long winter evenings (as I hinted before) they may be taught to seek such diversions, as may at once refresh and improve their minds.

FOR want of this, in some families the games of *draughts* and *chess* are practised, and some other little sports upon a chess-board, without any stakes or aim at gain,  
beyond



beyond the mere pleasure of victory. In other houses, *cards* and *dice* are introduced, for want of better recreations. The former of these, namely, *draughts* and *chess*, are innocent enough, and may wear off a heavy hour, when the mind or body are unfit for business: the latter have had the general censure of our wise and pious fathers; and there have been most unhappy effects attending them: and indeed, these games are seldom used without depositing too much money as the stake; and this tends to engage the passions with greater vehemence than the nature of a *recreation* can require, or should admit. But I leave it to those who are more skilful in casuistic divinity, to prove them absolutely unlawful in the very nature of the game.

HOWEVER that be, I have often earnestly wished, that instead of all these games, there were some more profitable sports invented for a long evening, for a dull hour, or a rainy season: and I am well assured, that if some ingenious mind, which is well skilled in mathematical learning and in games, would but take pains to contrive some such diversions; there might be a much better account given of the hours of leisure and remission of business by persons of both sexes, and of all ages, than can be at present, for want of such useful and improving recreations.

WHAT

WHAT if *cards* and *dice* should be proved to be ever so lawful in themselves, yet there might be various inventions, of much more advantage to knowledge and virtue, placed in the room of them. May not some little tablets of pasteboard be made in imitation of *cards*, which might teach the unlearned several parts of grammar, philosophy, geometry, geography, astronomy, &c.

WHAT if on one side of these tablets or charts a town or city were named and described, and on the other side the county, province, and kingdom where that town stands, with some geographical or historical remark on it: and whosoever in play draws the *chart* with the town on it, should be obliged to tell the county where it stands, and the remark on it?

WHAT if on one side were a geometrical figure, and on the other the demonstration of some property belonging to it?

WHAT if one side bore the name or figure of any piece of money; and the other all the multiples of it by the nine digits, or as far as twelve? This would be useful for children bred up to a trade.

WHAT if the figure of some plant, animal, engine, or any thing else in the world of nature or art, were printed on one side; and on the other the name of the thing, which should be required to be spelled right by young scholars when they see the figure,

figure, in order to teach them the art of spelling. And if to this were added some beautiful expression or description of the thing, taken out of our best *English* Poets, to be repeated by him who draws the chart which has the figure on it?

OR if on one side were a word in *English*, and on the other the same thing expressed in *Latin*, *Greek* or *French*, for such who learn those languages.

OR if single names of famous men and women were on one side; and the reverse contained the history, or some short account, of those persons whose names are so famous.

WHAT if in a sheet of paper, or a two-penny book, were written a hundred proverbs or wise sayings, collected out of moralists, ancient and modern, relating to all the virtues and vices: and a collection of the most eminent examples of these vices and virtues were superadded: and if one or more solid bodies of wood, of sixteen, twenty, or thirty-two flat sides were formed with the name of one virtue or vice inscribed on each side; and by the trolling of this many-sided toy, the uppermost word or name should be an indication what proverb, or what example to require?

THERE have been, I confess, several sorts of *cards* invented with proverbs, with various learned figures, and mathematical



devices upon them : but, as far as I can learn, these have been but mere pictures and ornaments to the *hearts* and *diamonds* : these learned devices and figures have had no share in the game : the *cards* are used like common *cards* still, without any manner of improvement of any of the gamesters in these sciences. But what I propose, is a contrivance to render these words, or figures, or sentences, the very implements or engines of the sport itself, without so much as the form of any *spade*, or *club*, or *heart*, or *diamond* drawn upon the chart or tablet.

SOME of these exercises and diversions, if happily contrived, may not only be fit to entertain children in their younger years, but may usefully amuse them when they are grown up toward manly age.

FOR my part, I own myself to be so much unskilled in the various games used among us, that I am not fit to contrive, nor capable of inventing such useful pastime. But I wish some of the sons of ingenuity had science and virtue so much at heart, as to attempt such a service to mankind. And parents should seek some sort of delightful employments or recreations for the leisure hours of their sons and their daughters, when they are in the stage of youth, that they may be the more easily withheld from those diversions.



versions of the present age, which are so fashionable and yet so dangerous.

AMONG these dangerous and modish diversions, I cannot forbear to mention *midnight-assemblies, play-houses, gaming-tables, and masquerades*. Let parents who would willingly see their children walking in the paths of piety and virtue, endeavour to guard their inclinations from these enticing amusements. The religion and conscience of many a well-inclined youth, have been exposed to great and imminent danger among those scenes of vanity and folly, to say no worse. My business is not to rail at them, though some of my readers will hardly forgive me that I deal with them so tenderly, and give them names of so soft a sound. But this must be confessed, that if persons of piety frequent them, they too much risque their character and their innocence, and expose their virtue and their piety to great and needless temptations: or at least by giving the sanction of their presence at such places, and on such occasions, may make themselves accessory to the ruin of those who may be less fortified against their ensnaring tendency.

YET some of these diversions and amusements are so charming to many a young thoughtless creature, that no risque is thought too great to run, if they may but please their ears and their eyes, and gratify

fy their idle and vain inclinations. Hence these *houses of pleasure* are filled and frequented: hence the *theatres* are crowded, and *gaming-rooms* attended by multitudes of youth, whose parents have enjoyed the blessing of a stricter education: and though their estate can scarcely support their irregular expence, yet they gratify their children in these hazardous recreations, and take no pains to cure them of this pernicious folly.

BUT the children of our age will pertly reply, “What, we must live like no-body? Must we turn old *Puritans* again? Must we look like fools in company, where there is scarcely any discourse but of *plays, operas and masquerades, of cards, dice, and midnight-assemblies?* And pray what sin is there in any of them?”

To this I *answer*, that I am very sorry to find that the children of religious parents choose and delight in company where these things are the chief subject of conversation. I fear, lest God and virtue, and the important things of another world, are utterly banished out of such a visiting-room, where these discourses are the chief entertainment, and there is little place found for any profitable conversation, even about the most useful and valuable affairs of this life.

BUT, light as these pert questions are, I will consider them one after another. You

say first, "Must we look like old *Puritans*? Must we live like no-body?" No, my friends, I am not persuading you to return to the habit and guise of your ancestors, nor to transact your visits, nor to model your diversions by the pattern of fourscore years ago. There is a certain fashion and appearance of things, that belongs to every age: modes of conversation, and forms of behaviour, are ever changing in this life: and it is no improper thing for persons, according to their rank and figure in life, to conform themselves to the present customs, as far as they are innocent, and have no evil influence upon morality or religion. But where any unhappy customs prevail in the world that make an inroad upon your piety, that endanger your virtue, that break the good order of religious families, and are usually or always attended with some mischievous consequences, surely in these instances it is better to look like a Puritan, and stand almost alone, than to follow the multitude in the road that leads to iniquity and mischief. A *Puritan*, or a *Separatist* from the vain or dangerous courses of a vicious world, is to this day a name of lasting glory; though the enemies of God and of your ancestors, may cast it upon them in a way of reproach. There are some things in which you must dare to be singular, if you would be Christians, and especially



cially in a corrupt and degenerate age. A sense of the love of God secured to your hearts, and an inward peace of conscience, will infinitely countervail the enmity of the world, and overbalance the reproaches of an ungodly generation.

BESIDES, if the families that profess religion, and desire to preserve piety amongst them, and to transmit it down to their children's children, would but heartily join together, in a resolved abstinence from these hazardous diversions, there would be no need of any one of you to stand alone, and your appearance on the side of virtue would not be singular. You might animate and support one another with public courage, and, having God and virtue on your side, you might, in some measure, bear down the effrontery and ridicule of an age of vice and sensuality; an age wherein comedies and masquerades, gaming-tables and midnight-assemblies are become the modish diversions.

BUT still it may be said, "*What sin is there in any of them?*" Bear with me then while I take them in order one after another, and briefly give my opinion concerning each of them.

1. LET us begin with the *playhouse*. It is granted, that a dramatic representation of the affairs of human life is by no means sinful in itself: I am inclined to think, that  
valuable



valuable compositions might be made of this kind, such as might entertain a virtuous audience with innocent delight, and even with some real profit. Such have been written in *French*, and have, in times past, been acted with applause. But it is too well known, that the comedies which appear on our stage, and most of the tragedies too, have no design to set religion or virtue in its best light, nor to render vice odious to the spectators. In many of them, piety makes a ridiculous figure, and virtue is dressed in the habit of folly; the sacred name of God is frequently taken in vain, if not blasphemed; and the man of flagrant vice is the fine gentleman, and the poet's favourite, who must be rewarded at the end of the play.

BESIDES, there is nothing will pass on our theatres that has not the mixture of some amorous intrigue: lewdness itself reigns, and riots in some of their scenes: sobriety is put quite out of countenance, and modesty is in certain danger there: the youth of serious religion, that ventures sometimes into this infected air, finds his antidotes too weak to resist the contagion. The pleasures of the closet and devout retirement are suspended first, and then utterly vanquished by the overpowering influence of the last comedy: the fancy is all over defiled, the vain images rise uppermost

in the soul, and pollute the feeble attempts of devotion, till by degrees secret religion is lost and forgotten: and in a little time the playhouse has got so much the mastery of conscience, that the young christian goes to bed after the evening drama, with as much satisfaction and ease, as he used to do after evening prayer.

If there have been found two or three *plays* which have been tolerably free from lewd and profane mixtures, there are some scores or hundreds that have many hateful passages in them, for which no excuse can be made. And when all the charming powers of poesy and music are joined with the gayest scenes and entertainments, to assault the senses and the soul at once, and to drive out virtue from the possession of the heart, it is to be feared that it will not long keep its place and power there. What a *prophet of their own* says of the *court*, may with much more truth and justice be said of the *theatre*.

*It is a golden, but a fatal circle,  
Upon whose magic skirts a thousand devils  
In crystal forms sit, tempting innocence,  
And beckon early virtue from its centre,*

ANOTHER of the poets of the town, who made no great pretences to virtue, and who well knew the qualities of the theatre,

atre, and its mischievous influence, writes thus of it.

*It would be endless to trace all the vice  
That from the playhouse takes immediate  
rise.*

*It is the unexhausted magazine  
That stocks the land with vanity and sin.  
——By flourishing so long,  
Numbers have been undone, both old and  
young.*

*And many hundred souls are now unblest,  
Which else had dy'd in peace, and found  
eternal rest.*

As for any of my friends who are not yet convinced of the justice of these censures, I entreat them to read what Mr. Collier, Mr. Bedford, and Mr. Lawe have written on this subject. And though I would by no means justify and support every remark they have made, yet I think every reader who has a modest and pious soul, and has the cause of God and virtue near his heart, will be a little afraid to give his presence there, lest he should seem to encourage such incentives to iniquity and profaneness: or if he should go thither once, merely to see and know what it is, I will persuade myself he will not make it his practice, or frequent that house of infection.

BUT

BUT you will say, “ There is some advantage to be gained by these entertainments: there is a deal of fine language in them, and fashionable airs of conversation: there are many of the fooleries of life exposed in the theatre, which suit not a more solemn place; and comedies will teach us to know the world, and to avoid the ridicule of the age.”

BUT let my younger friends, who are so willing to improve in their knowledge of the world and politeness, remember, that whatsoever may be gotten, there is much more to be lost among those perilous and enticing scenes of vanity: the risque of their virtue and serious religion, can never be recompensed by the learning a few fine speeches and modish airs, or the correction of some awkward and unfashionable piece of behaviour. This is to plunge headlong into the sea, that I may wash off a little dirt from my coat, or to venture on poison in order to cure a pimple.

BESIDES, most or all of these ends might be attained by reading some few of the best of them in private: though I confess, I am cautious how I recommend this practice, because I think that almost all these dramatic composures in our age, have some dangerous mixtures in them. Those volumes of short essays which are entitled the *Spectator*, will give a sufficient knowledge  
of



of the ways of the world, and cure us of a hundred little follies, without the danger that there is in reading of plays: though even in those very volumes, I could heartily wish that here and there a leaf were left out, wherein the writers speak too favourably of the stage, and now and then (though rarely) introduce a sentence that would raise a blush in the face of strict virtue.

(2.) The next forbidden diversion is the *masquerade*. By all the descriptions that I have heard of it, it seems to be a very low piece of foolery, fitted for children and for persons of a little and trifling genius, who can entertain themselves at *blind-man's-buff*. And as the entertainment is much meaner than that of the theatre, so it is something more hazardous to virtue and innocence. It does not so much as pretend to any such improvement of the mind as the theatre professes; while it lays a more dreadful snare to modesty, and has made too often a dismal inroad on the morals of those that frequent it. Could I but persuade persons to read what the Right Reverend the late Lord Bishop of *London* has published, in his sermon for the *Reformation of Manners*, I am ready to think, that all those who profess virtue, would *refrain their feet far from it, and not come near the doors of the house*. His words are these.

“ AMONGST

“ AMONGST the various engines con-  
 “ trived by a corrupt generation to support  
 “ vice and profaneness, and keep them in  
 “ countenance, I must particularly take  
 “ notice of *masquerades*, as they deprive  
 “ virtue and religion of their last refuge,  
 “ I mean *shame*, which keeps multitudes  
 “ of sinners within the bounds of decency,  
 “ after they have broken through all the  
 “ ties of principle and conscience. But  
 “ this invention sets them free from that  
 “ tie also; being neither better nor worse,  
 “ than an opportunity to say and do there,  
 “ what virtue, decency, and good man-  
 “ ners will not permit to be said or done in  
 “ any other place. If persons of either sex  
 “ will frequent lewd and profane plays,  
 “ or openly join themselves to loose and  
 “ atheistical assemblies of any kind, they  
 “ have their reward, they are sure to be  
 “ marked and branded by all good men,  
 “ as persons of corrupt minds and vicious  
 “ inclinations, who have abandoned reli-  
 “ gion and all pretences to it, and given  
 “ themselves over to luxury and profane-  
 “ ness. And as bad as the world is, this  
 “ is a very heavy load upon the characters  
 “ of men, and in spite of all the endea-  
 “ vours of vice to bear up and keep itself  
 “ in countenance, it sinks them by degrees  
 “ into infamy and contempt. But this  
 “ pernicious invention intrenches vice and  
 “ pro-

“ profaneness against all the assaults and  
 “ impressions of shame: and whatever  
 “ lewdness may be concerted, whatever  
 “ luxury, immodesty, or extravagance may  
 “ be committed in word or deed, no one’s  
 “ reputation is at stake, no one’s charac-  
 “ ter is responsible for it. A circum-  
 “ stance of such terrible consequence to  
 “ virtue and good-manners, that if *mas-*  
 “ *querades* shall ever be revived (as we  
 “ heartily hope they will not) all serious  
 “ christians within these two great and po-  
 “ pulous cities will be nearly concerned to  
 “ lay it to heart, and diligently bestir them-  
 “ selves in cautioning their friends and  
 “ neighbours against such fatal snares.  
 “ Particularly, all who have the govern-  
 “ ment and education of youth, ought to  
 “ take the greatest care to keep them out  
 “ of the way of this dangerous tempta-  
 “ tion, and then to labour against the  
 “ spreading of it.

“ I cannot forbear to add, that, all re-  
 “ ligious considerations apart, this is a di-  
 “ version that no true *Englishman* ought to  
 “ be fond of, when he remembers that it  
 “ was brought in among us by the ambaf-  
 “ sador of a neighbouring nation in the last  
 “ reign, while his master was in measures  
 “ to enslave us: and indeed, there is not a  
 “ more effectual way to enslave a people,  
 “ than first to dispirit and enfeeble them by  
 “ li-



“ licentiousness and effeminacy.” Thus far the right reverend author, whose zeal for the suppression of all these tempting machineries, has been so conspicuous and honourable.

(3.) THE third place of dangerous resort, is the *gaming-table*. Many young gentlemen have been there bubbled and cheated of large sums of money, which were given them by their parents to support them honourably in their stations. In such sort of shops, young ladies are tempted to squander away too large a share of their yearly allowance, if not of the provision which their parents have made for their whole lives. It is a fatal snare to both sexes: if they win, they are allured still onward, while, according to their language, *luck runs on their side*: if they lose, they are tempted to another and another cast of the die, and enticed on still to fresh games by a delusive hope, that *fortune will turn*, and they shall recover all that they have lost. In the midst of these scenes their passions rise shamefully, a greedy desire of gain makes them warm and eager, and new losses plunge them sometimes into vexation and fury, till the soul is quite beaten off from its guard, and virtue and reason have no manner of command over them.

My worthy friend Mr. *Neal*, in his reformation-sermon, has taken occasion not  
only



SECT. IX. *and Diversions of Children.* 191

only to inform us, that “merchants and  
 “tradesmen mix themselves at these ta-  
 bles with men of desperate fortunes,  
 “and throw the dice for their estates:”  
 but in a very decent and soft manner of  
 address has enquired, “whether public  
 “gaming in virtuous ladies is not a little  
 “out of character? Whether it does not  
 “draw them into mixed company, and  
 “give them an air of boldness, which is  
 “perfectly inconsistent with that modesty,  
 “which is the ornament of the fair sex?  
 “Whether it does not engage them in an  
 “habit of idleness, and of keeping ill hours?  
 “Whether their passions are not sometimes  
 “disordered? And whether the losses they  
 “sustain, have not a tendency to breed ill  
 “blood in their families, and between their  
 “nearest relations? It has been often ob-  
 “served, that gaming in a lady has usual-  
 “ly been attended with the loss of repu-  
 “tation, and sometimes of that which is  
 “still more valuable, her virtue and ho-  
 “nour.” Thus far proceeds this useful  
 sermon.

Now if these be the dismal and frequent  
 consequences of the *gaming-table*, the loss  
 of a little money is one of the least injuries  
 you sustain by it. But what if you should  
 still come off gainers? Is this the way that  
 God has taught or allowed us to procure the  
 necessary comforts of life? Is this a sort  
 of

of labour or traffic on which you can ask the blessing of heaven? Can you lift up your face to God, and pray, that he would succeed the cast of the die, the drawing of the lot, or the dealing out of the cards, so as to increase your gain, while it is the very sense and language of the prayer, that your neighbour may sustain so much loss? This is a sad and guilty circumstance which belongs to gaming, that one can gain nothing but what another loses; and consequently, we cannot ask a *blessing* upon ourselves, but at the same time we pray for a *blast* upon our neighbour.

WILL you hope to excuse it by saying, that my neighbour consents to this blast, or this loss, by entering into the game, and there is no injury where there is consent?

I *answer*, that though he consents to lose *conditionally* and upon a venturous hope of gain, yet he is not willing to sustain the loss *absolutely*; but when either chance, or his neighbour's skill in the game has determined against him, then he is constrained to lose, and does it unwillingly; so that he still sustains it as a loss, or misfortune, or evil. Now if you ask a blessing from heaven on this way of your getting money, you ask rather *absolutely* that your neighbour may sustain a loss, without any regard to the *condition* of his hope of gain. Your wish and prayer is directly that you  
may

may get, and he may lose: you cannot wish this good to yourself, but you wish the contrary evil to him: and therefore I think gaming for gain cannot be consistent with the laws of *Christ*, which certainly forbid us to wish evil to our neighbour.

AND if you cannot so much as in thought ask God's blessing on this, as you certainly may on such recreations as have an evident tendency innocently to exercise the body and relax the mind, it seems your conscience secretly condemns it, and there is an additional proof of its being evil to *you*.

ALL the justest writers of morality, and the best casuists, have generally, if not universally, determined against these methods of gain. Whatsoever game may be indulged as lawful, it is still as a recreation, and not as a calling or business of life: and therefore no larger sums ought to be risked or ventured in this manner, than what may be lawfully laid out by any persons for their present recreation, according to their different circumstances in the world.

BESIDES all this, think of the loss of time, and the waste of life that is continually made by some who frequent these gaming-places. Think how it calls away many a youth from their proper business, and tempts them to throw away what is not their own, and to risque the substance, as well as the displeasure of their parents, or



of their master, at all the uncertain hazards of a dice-box. Read the pages which Mr. *Neal* has employed on this theme, 'in the sermon just now cited: read what Mr. *Dorrington* has written several years ago on this subject of *gaming*: I wish such discourses were fresh in print, and put into the hands of every one who lies under this temptation.

(4.) THE *midnight-assemblies* are the last which I shall mention of those modish and hazardous diversions, wherein youth are drawn away to much vanity, and plunged into the sensual gaieties of life; and that at those hours, part of which should be devoted to the religion of the family, or the closet, and partly to the nightly repose of nature. It is acknowledged to be proper and needful, that young people should be indulged in some recreations, agreeable to their age, and suitable to the condition in which Providence has placed them. But I would ask whether the great and only valuable end of recreation is to be expected from these midnight-assemblies, namely, *to relieve us from the fatigues of life, and to exhilarate the spirits, so as thereby to fit us for the duties of life and religion?* Now are these the proper means to fit us for the duties of either kind? Perhaps it will be said, that *dancing*, which is practised in those assemblies, is an exercise conducive to health,



health, and therefore a means of fitting us for the *duties of life*. But may not the unseasonableness of the midnight-hour prevent and over-balance the benefit, that might otherwise be supposed to arise from the exercise? Is it likely that natural health should be promoted, or preserved, by changing the seasons and order of nature, and by allotting those hours to *exercise*, which God and nature have ordained to *rest*? Is the returning home after five or six hours dancing, through the cold and damp of the midnight-air, a proper means of preserving health? or rather, is it not more likely to impair and destroy it? Have not these fatal effects been too often felt? Have there not been sacrifices of human life offered to this midnight idol? Have there been no fair young martyrs to this unseasonable folly? Are there not some of its slaves who are become feeble, labouring under sore diseases, and some of them fallen asleep in death? Have not their music and their dancing, instead of natural rest in their beds, brought them down to a long silence in the grave, and an untimely rest in a bed of dust? Those amiable pieces of human nature, who were lately the joy and hope of their too indulgent parents, are now the bitterness of their hearts; and those very exercises from whence they hoped the continuance of their joy, as the supposed means

of confirming their children's health, are become an everlasting spring of their mourning.

AND as those midnight-recreations are *badly* suited to fit us for the duties of the civil life, so they are *worse* suited to fit us for, or rather, they are more apparently opposite to, the duties of religion. The religion of the closet is neglected, the beautiful regularity and order of the family is broken; and when the night has been turned into day, a good part of the next day is turned into night, while the duties of the morning, both to *God* and *man*, are unperformed. Those who have frequented these assemblies know all this, and are my witnesses to the truth of it. Nay, the very practice itself, at those unseasonable hours, tells all the world how much they prefer these dangerous amusements to the worship of God in the evening, and in the morning, and to all the conveniencies and decorum of family-government. Besides, if I speak to *Christians*, have you not found that the indulgence to this sort of diversions, which are usually practised in those unseasonable assemblies, leads the mind away insensibly from God and religion, gives a vanity to the spirit, and greatly abates the spiritual and heavenly temper which should belong to Christians? Hath it not taken away the savour of godliness and  
tincture

tincture of piety from some younger minds? And do elder Christians never suffer by it? Let it be further considered, *what sort of company you mingle with in those midnight-assemblies.* Are they most frequented by the wise and pious, or by the more vain and vicious part of mankind? Do they tend to fill your mind with the most improving notions, and your ears and your lips with the most proper conversation? Do you that frequent them never find your piety in danger there? Does strict religion and prayer relish so well with you after those gawdy nights of mirth and folly? And do you then, when you join in those assemblies, practise the commands of God, to *abstain from all appearance of evil*, and to *shun the paths of temptation*? Can you pray for a blessing on your attendance on these *midnight-meetings*? Or can you hope to run into the midst of those sparks and living coals, and yet not be burned, nor so much as have your garments singed? Are not parents very generally sensible, that there are dangerous snares to youth in those gay diversions? And therefore the mother will herself go along with her young offspring, to take care of them, and to watch over them; and perhaps there is scarcely any place or time which more wants the watchful eye of a superior. But here let me ask, is this all the reason why the mother attends those



scenes of vanity? Has she no relish for them herself? Has she no gay humours of her own to be gratified, which she disguises and covers with the pretence of a parental solicitude for the virtue and honour of her offspring? Are there no mothers who freely lead their children into those perilous places, where soul and body are in danger, and are really, their *tempters*, under a colour of being their *guardians*?

You will plead, perhaps, that some of these things are proper for the improvement of young people in *good breeding* and *politeness*. They must be brought into company, to see the world, and to learn how to behave with becoming decency. Well, suppose these assemblies to be academies of politeness, and that young people attend there upon lectures of good-breeding. Is there no other time so fit as midnight, to polish the youth of both sexes, and to breed them well? May not an hour or two be appointed, at more proper seasons, by select companies, for mutual conversation and innocent delight? Can there be no genteel recreations enjoyed, no lessons of behaviour taught by day-light? Can no method of improvement in good-breeding be contrived and appointed, which shall be more secure from temptations and inconveniences? Are there none which are more harmless, more innocent, of better reputation  
among



among persons of strict piety, and which make less inroads on the duties of life, both solitary and social, civil and religious?

SHALL I enquire once more, what is done at many of those midnight-assemblies, before the dance is begun, or when it is ended, and what is the entertainment of those who are not engaged in dancing! Are they not active in *gaming*? Are not *cards* the business of the hour? Are not children educated, by this means, in the love of gaming? And do they not hereby get such a relish of it, as proves afterwards pernicious to them? Now if gaming be not a practice fit to be encouraged, what encouragement do those assemblies deserve, where gaming is one of the chief diversions or businesses?

BUT it is time to put an end to this sort of discourse. I beg pardon of my readers for having drawn it out to so great a length: for I have said too much on this subject, for those who have no inclination to these criminal and dangerous diversions: and I wish I may have said enough to do good to those who have.

UPON the whole, I conclude, it is the duty of parents who would give their children a *good education*, to see to it that children, in their younger years, do not indulge such recreations as may spoil all the good effects of the pious instructions, the pray-

ers, and care of their parents. Otherwise, if you encourage them in such recreations, you are building up those vanities of mind, and those vicious inclinations with one hand, which you labour to prevent or to destroy with the other.

## S E C T. X.

*Of the proper Degrees of Liberty and Restraint in the Education of a Son, illustrated by Example.*

SO weak and unhappy is human nature, that it is ever ready to run into extremes; and when we would recover ourselves from an excess on the right hand, we know not where to stop till we are got to an excess on the left. Instances of this kind are innumerable in all the affairs of human life; but it is hardly more remarkable in any thing, than in the strict and severe education of our fathers a century ago, and in the most profuse and unlimited liberty that is indulged to children in our age.

IN those days, the sons were bred up to learning by terrible discipline: every *Greek* and *Latin* author they conversed with, was attended with one or many new scourges,  
to

to drive them into acquaintance with him; and not the least misdemeanor in life could escape the lash: as though the father would prove his daily *love to his son* by never *sparing his rod*, Prov. xiii. 24. Now-a-days young master must be treated with a foolish fondness, till he is grown to the size of man; and let his faults be ever so heinous, and his obstinacy ever so great, yet the preceptor must not let him hear the name of the rod, lest the child should be frightened or hurt; the advice of the wisest of men is utterly forgotten, when he tells us, that due *correction shall drive out the folly that is bound up in the heart of a child*, Prov. xxii. 15. Or else they boldly reverse his divine counsel, *Prov. xiii. 24.* as though they would make the rule of their practice a direct contradiction to the words of *Solomon*, namely, *He that spareth the rod loveth his son, but he that hateth him chastens him betimes.*

IN that day, many children were kept in a most servile subjection, and not suffered to sit down, or to speak, in the presence of their father, till they were come to the age of one and twenty. The least degree of freedom was esteemed a bold presumption, and incurred a sharp reproof. Now they are made familiar companions to their parents, almost from the very nursery; and there-



therefore they will hardly bear a check or rebuke at their hand.

IN the beginning of the last century, and so onward to the middle of it, the children were usually obliged to believe what their parents and their masters taught them, whether they were principles of science, or articles of faith and practice: they were tied down almost to every punctilio, as though it were necessary to salvation; they were not suffered to examine or enquire whether their teachers were in the right, and scarcely knew upon what grounds they were to assent to the things that were taught them; for it was a maxim of all teachers, that the learner must believe: *Discentem operte credere*. Then an *ipse dixit*, or *Aristotle* said so, was a sufficient proof of any proposition in the colleges; and for a man of five and twenty to be a Christian and a Protestant, a Dissenter or a Churchman, it was almost reason enough to say, that his father was so. But in this century, when the doctrine of a just and reasonable liberty is better known, too many of the present youth break all the bonds of nature and duty, and run to the wildest degrees of looseness, both in belief and practice. They slight the religion which their parents have taught them, that they may appear to have chosen a religion for themselves: and when they have made a creed or belief of  
their



their own, or rather borrowed some scraps of infidelity from their vain companions and equals, they find pretences enough to cast off all other creeds at once, as well as the counsels and customs of their religious predecessors.

“THE practices of our fathers (say they) were precise and foolish, and shall be no rule for our conduct; the articles of their faith were absurd and mysterious, but we will believe nothing of mystery, lest our faith should be as ridiculous as theirs.” In their younger years, and before their reason is half grown, they pretend to examine the sublimest doctrines of christianity; and a raw and half-witted boy shall commence an infidel, because he cannot comprehend some of the glorious truths of the gospel; and laughs at his elders and his ancestors, for believing what they could not comprehend.

THE child now-a-days forgets that his parent is obliged, by all the laws of God and nature, to train him up in his own religion, till he is come to the proper age of discretion to judge for himself; he forgets, or he will not know, that the parent is intrusted with the care of the souls of his young offspring by the very laws of nature, as well as by the revealed covenants of innocence and of grace. The son now-a-days forgets the obligations he is under to honour  
and

and obey the persons that gave him birth ; he pays no regard to the doctrines which led on his ancestors to the love of God and man ; whereas doctrines that have such influence, claim at least some degrees of attention, and especially from a son who has been trained up in them, and beheld the effect of them in the piety of his parents ; nor will the very light of nature suffer him to depart from them, but upon the clearest judgment of his own mature reason, a thorough and impartial search into the subject, the loud inward dictates of his conscience, and the full evidence of his parents mistake.

So wanton and licentious a spirit has possessed some of the youth of the nation, that they never think they have freed themselves from the prejudices of their education, till they have thrown off almost all the yokes of restraint that were laid upon them by God or man. Some take a petulant pride in laying aside the Holy Scriptures, for the same reason that *Timothy* was advised to *continue in them* ; and that is, because *they have learned and known them from their very childhood*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. And some, perhaps, have been laughed out of their christianity, lest it should be said, their mothers and their nurses had made them Christians.

HERE-

HERETOFORE the sons were scarcely suffered to be absent from home an hour, without express leave, till they were arrived at the age of man, nor daughters till they were married; now both sexes take an unbounded licence of roving where they please, and from a dozen years old, they forget to ask leave to wander or to visit where their fancies lead them: at first the parent gives a loose and winks at it, and then the child claims it as his due for ever.

IN short, the last age taught mankind to believe that they were mere children, and treated them as such, till they were near thirty years old; but the present gives them leave to fancy themselves complete men and women at twelve or fifteen; and they accordingly judge and manage for themselves entirely, and too often despise all advice of their elders.

Now, though it be sufficiently evident that both these are extremes of liberty or restraint, yet if we judge by the reason of things, or by experience and success, surely the ancient education is to be preferred before the present, and of the two should rather be chosen.

IF we would determine this by reason, it is easy to see that a father of fifty or sixty years old, is fitter to judge for his son at four and twenty, in many matters of impor-



tance, than a boy of fifteen is to judge for himself.

OR, if we would decide the matter by experience, it is plain enough that the posterity of the *former* generation (who are the fathers and the grandfathers of the *present*) had more of serious religion and true virtue amongst them, than there is any hope or prospect of among the greatest part of their children and grand-children. And if I would use a bold metaphor, I might venture to say with truth, the *last* century has brought forth more solid fruits of goodness, than the *present* can yet show in blossoms; and in my opinion, this is much owing to the neglect of the pruning-knife,

BUT after all, is there no medium between these two extremes, excess of confinement, and excess of liberty? May not young understandings be allowed to shoot and spread themselves a little, without growing rank and rampant? May not children be kept in a due and gentle subjection to their parents, without putting yokes of bondage on them? Is there no reasonable restraint of the wild opinions and violent inclinations of youth, without making chains for the understanding, and throwing fetters on the soul? May not the young gentleman begin to act like a man, without forgetting that he is a son? And maintain the full liberty of his own judgment without



out insolence and contempt of the opinions of his elders? May not he who is bred up a Protestant and a Christian, judge freely for himself, without the prejudices of his education, and yet continue a Christian and a Protestant still? Is it not possible for the parent to indulge, and the child to enjoy, a just liberty, and yet neither encourage nor practise a wild licentiousness?

YES, surely; and there have been happy instances in the last age, and there are some in this, both of parents and children, that have learned to tread this middle path, and found wisdom and virtue in it, piety and peace. *Agathus* has bred his son up under such discipline, as renders them both proper examples to the world.

*EUGENIO* is just out of his minority, and in the twenty-second year of his age he practises the man with all that virtue and decency, which makes his father's acquaintance covet his company; and indeed they may learn by his discourse the art of good reasoning, as well as the precepts of piety from his example. He is an entertaining companion to the gay young gentlemen his equals; and yet divines and philosophers take a pleasure to have *Eugenio* amongst them. He is caressed by his superiors in honour and years; and though he is released from the discipline of parental education, yet he treats the lady his mother

ther with all that affectionate duty that could be desired or demanded of him ten years ago: his father is content to see his own youth outshined by his son, and confesses, that *Eugenio* already promises greater things than *Agathus* did at thirty.

If you ask whence these happy qualities arise, I grant there was some foundation for them in the very make of his nature; there was something of a complexional virtue mingled with his frame; but it is much more owing to the wise conduct of his parents from his very infancy, and the blessing of divine grace attending their labours, their prayers and their hopes.

HE was trained up from the very cradle to all the duties of infant virtue, by the allurements of love and remark, suited to his age; and never was driven to practise any thing by a frown or a hasty word, where it was possible for kinder affections to work the same effect by indulgence and delay.

As fast as his reasoning powers began to appear and exert themselves, they were conducted in an easy track of thought, to find out and observe the reasonableness of every part of his duty, and the lovely character of a child obedient to reason and to his parents will; while every departure from duty was shewn to be so contrary to reason, as laid an early foundation for conscience

science to work upon: conscience began here to assume its office, and to manifest its authority in dictates, and reproofs, and reflections of mind, peaceful or painful, according to his behaviour. When his parents observed this inward monitor to awake in his soul, they could better trust him out of their sight.

WHEN he became capable of conceiving of an almighty and invisible being, who made this world and every creature in it, he was taught to pay all due regard to this God his maker; and from the authority and love of his father on earth, he was led to form right ideas (as far as childhood permitted) of the power, government and goodness of the universal and supreme father of all in heaven.

HE was informed why punishment was due to an offence against God or his parents, that his fear might become a useful passion to awaken and guard his virtue; but he was instructed, at the same time, that where he heartily repented of a fault, and returned to his duty with new diligence, there was forgiveness to be obtained both of God and man.

WHEN at any time a friend interceded for him to his father, after he had been guilty of a fault, he was hereby directed into the doctrine of *Jesus the Mediator* between God and man; and thus he knew him



as an *intercessor*, before he could well understand the notion of his *sacrifice* and *atonement*.

IN his younger years he passed but twice under the correction of the rod; *once* for a fit of obstinacy and persisting in a Falshood; then he was given up to severe chastisement, and it dispelled and cured the sullen humour for ever; and *once* for the contempt of his mother's authority he endured the scourge again, and he wanted it no more.

HE was enticed sometimes to the love of letters, by making his lesson a reward of some domestic duty; and a permission to pursue some parts of learning, was the appointed recompence of his diligence and improvement in others.

THERE was nothing required of his memory but what was first (as far as possible) let into his understanding: and by proper images and representations, suited to his years, he was taught to form some conception of the things described, before he was bid to learn the words by heart. Thus he was freed from the danger of treasuring up the cant and jargon of mere names, instead of the riches of solid knowledge.

WHERE any abstruse and difficult notions occurred in his course of learning, his preceptor postponed them till he had gone through that subject in a more superficial way;



way; for this purpose he passed twice through all the sciences; and to make the doctrines of christianity easy to him in his childhood, he had two or three catechisms, composed by his tutor, each of them suited to his more early or more improved capacity, till at twelve years old he was thought fit to learn that public form, which is more universally taught and approved.

As he was enured to reasoning from his childhood, so he was instructed to prove every thing, according to the nature of the subject, by natural or moral arguments, as far as his years would admit: and thus he drew much of his early knowledge from reason, or from revelation, by the force of his judgment, and not merely from his teachers by the strength of his memory.

HIS parents were persuaded indeed that they ought to teach him the principles of virtue while he was a child; and the most important truths of religion both natural and revealed, before he was capable of deriving them from the fund of his own reason; or of framing a religion for himself out of so large a book as the Bible. They thought themselves under the obligation of that divine command, *Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it*, Prov. xxii. 6. And therefore *from a child they made him acquainted with the holy scriptures*, and per-

suaded him to believe that they were *given by the inspiration of God*, before it was possible for him to take in the arguments from reason, history, tradition, &c. which must be joined together to confirm the sacred canon, and prove the several books of the Bible to be divine. Thus, like *Timothy*, he *continued in the things which he had learned, and had been assured of, knowing of whom he had learned them*, 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15, 16. Yet as his years advanced, they thought it requisite to show him the solid and rational foundations of his faith, that his hope might be built upon the authority of God, and not of men.

THUS the apostles and prophets were made his early companions: and being instructed in the proofs of the christian religion, and the divine original of his Bible, he pays a more constant and sacred regard to it, since his judgment and reason assure him that it is the word of God, than when he was a child, and believed it because his mother told him so. He reads the scriptures daily now, not like the lessons of his infancy, but as the infallible rule of his faith and practice: he searches them every day in his closet, not to confirm any articles and doctrines that he is resolved to believe, but (as the noble *Bereans* did) to examine and try whether those doctrines and  
articles

articles ought to be believed or no, which he was taught in the nursery.

AFTER he arrived at fifteen he was suffered to admit nothing into his full assent, till his mind saw the rational evidence of the proposition itself; or at least till he felt the power of those reasons which obliged him to assent upon moral evidence and testimony, where the evidences of sense or of reason were not to be expected. He knew that he was not to hope for mathematical proofs that there is a pope at *Rome*, that the *Turks* have dominion over *Judea*, that *St. Paul* wrote an epistle to the *Romans*, that *Christ* was crucified without the gates of *Jerusalem*, and that in three days time he rose from the dead; and yet that there is just and reasonable evidence to enforce and support the belief of all these. Where truths were too sublime for present comprehension, he would never admit them as a part of his faith, till he saw full evidence of a speaking God, and a divine revelation.

HIS tutor never imposed any thing on him with a magisterial air, but by way of advice recommended to him such studies and such methods of improvement, as his experience had long approved; he gave frequent hints of the danger of some opinions, and the fatal consequences of some modish and mistaken principles. He let him know generally what sentiments he himself



embraced among the divided opinions of the age: and what clear and comprehensive knowledge, what satisfaction of judgment, serenity of mind, and peace of conscience, were to be found in the principles which he had chosen; but he exhorted his pupil still to choose wisely for himself, and led him onward in the sciences, and in common and sacred affairs, to frame his own sentiments by just rules of reasoning: though *Eugenio* did not superstitiously confine his belief to the opinions of his instructor, yet he could not but love the man that indulged him in such a liberty of thought, and gave him such an admirable clue, by which he let himself into the secrets of knowledge, human and divine: thus under the happy and insensible influences of so prudent a supervisor, he traced the paths of learning, and enjoyed the unspeakable pleasure of being his own teacher, and of framing his opinions himself. By this means he began early to use his reason with freedom, and to judge for himself, without a servile submission to the authority of others; and yet to pay a just and solemn deference to persons of age and experience, and particularly to those who were the proper and appointed guides of his youth, and who led him on so gently in the paths of knowledge.



HE loves to call himself by the honourable name of a *christian*: and though his particular sentiments approach much nearer to the opinions of some parties than to others; yet he likes not to be called by the name of any party, for he is wise and bold enough to be a bigot to none. He practises a noble and an extensive charity to those that, in lesser matters, differ widely from him, if they do but maintain the most essential and necessary parts of christianity; nor does he seclude them from his communion, nor withhold himself from theirs; but as the providence of God gives him just occasions, he eats and drinks with them at the table of their common Lord, provided always that they impose nothing upon his practice contrary to his conscience.

YET his charity has its limits too: for he hardly knows how to worship the Son of God in the most solemn ordinance of communion, with those that esteem him but a mere man; nor can he join with an assembly of professed *Socinians* to commemorate the death of *Christ*, who deny it to be a proper atonement for the sins of men.

HE dares to believe the doctrines of original sin, the satisfaction of *Christ*, the influences of the blessed spirit, and other despised truths of the gospel; and this not because his ancestors believed them, but because he cannot avoid the evidence of them

in scripture. And if in some few points of less importance he takes leave to differ from the sentiments of his elders, it is with such a becoming modesty, that convinces his father how unwilling he is to dissent from him; and yet he maintains his opinion with such an appearance of argument, and such an honest concern for truth and piety, that makes it plain to his friends, that he is under the strong constraint of an inward conviction. Thus, though he has perhaps some new apprehensions of things, yet he is by no means led into them by a licentious humour of opposing his teachers, nor a wanton pride of free-thinking.

HE was not kept a stranger to the errors and follies of mankind, nor was he let loose amongst them, either in books or in company, without a guard and a guide. His preceptor let him know the gross mistakes and iniquities of men, ancient and modern, but inlaid him with proper principles of truth and virtue, and furnished him with such rules of judgment, as led him more easily to distinguish between good and bad; and thus he was secured against the infection and the poison, both of the living and the dead.

HE had early cautions given him to avoid the bantering tribe of mortals, and was instructed to distinguish a jest from an argument, so that a loud laugh at his religion,

ligion, never puts him nor his faith out of countenance. He is ever ready to render a reason of his christian hope, and to defend his creed; but he scorns to enter the lists with such a disputant that has no artillery but squib and flash, no arguments besides grimace and ridicule. Thus he supports the character of a christian with honour; he confines his faith to his Bible, and his practice to all the rules of piety; and yet thinks as freely as that vain herd of atheists and deists who arrogate the name of *free-thinkers* to themselves.

You will enquire, perhaps, how he came to attain so manly a conduct in life at so early an age, and how every thing of the *boy* was worn off so soon. Truly, besides other influences, it is much owing to the happy management of *Erafte*, (that was the name of the lady his mother) she was frequent in the nursery, and inspired sentiments into his childhood becoming riper years. When there was company in the parlour, with whom she could use such a freedom, she brought her son in among them, not to entertain them with his own noise and tattle and impertinence, but to hear their discourse, and sometimes to answer a little question or two they might ask him. When he was grown up to a youth, he was often admitted into the room with his father's acquaintance, and was indulged



the liberty to ask and enquire on subjects that seemed to be above his years: he was encouraged to speak a sentence or two of his own thoughts, and thus to learn and practise a modest assurance. But when the company was gone, he was approved and praised if he behaved well, or received kind hints of admonition that he might know when he had been too silent, and when too forward to speak. Thus by enjoying the advantage of society above the level of his own age and understanding, he was always aspiring to imitation; and the excesses and defects of his conduct were daily noticed and cured.

HIS curiosity was gratified abroad with new sights and scenes, as often as his parents could do it with convenience, that he might not stare and wonder at every strange object or occurrence; but he was made patient of restraint and disappointment, when he seemed to indulge an excessive desire of any needless diversion. If he sought any criminal pleasures, or diversions attended with great danger and inconvenience, the pursuit of them was absolutely forbidden; but it was done in so kind a manner, as made the guilt or peril of them appear in the strongest light, and thereby they were rendered hateful or formidable, rather than the objects of wish or desire.

WHEN



WHEN *Eugenio* first began to go abroad in the world, his companions were recommended to him by the prudence of his parents; or if he chose them himself, it was still within the reach of his tutor's observation, or the notice of his father's eye: nor was he suffered to run loose into promiscuous company, till it appeared that his mind was furnished with steady principles of virtue; till he had knowledge enough to defend those principles; and to repel the assaults that might be made upon his faith. And for this reason, till he was twenty years old, he gave account to his superiors how he spent the day, whensoever he was absent from them; though they did not at that age require that he should ask formal leave for a few hours excursion.

YET it was hardly thought fit to trust him to his own conduct for whole days together, lest he should meet with temptations too hard for his virtue, till he had gained resolution enough to say NO boldly, and to maintain an obstinate refusal of pernicious pleasures. He was told before-hand how the profane and the lewd would use all the arts of address, and how subtilly they would practise upon his good humour with powerful and tempting importunities. This set him ever upon his guard, and though he carried his sweetness of temper always about with him, yet he learned to  
conceal

conceal it wheresoever it was neither proper or safe to appear. By a little converse in the world, he found that it was necessary to be positive, bold and unmoveable in rejecting every proposal which might endanger his character or his morals: especially as he soon became sensible that a soft and cold denial gave courage to new attacks, and left him liable to be teized with fresh solicitations. He laid down this therefore for a constant rule, that where his reason had determined any practice to be either plainly sinful, or utterly inexpedient, he would give so firm a denial, upon the principles of virtue and religion, as should for ever discourage any further solicitations. This gave him the character of a man of resolute virtue, even among the rakes of the time, nor was he ever esteemed the less on this account. At first indeed he thought it a happy victory which he had gotten over himself, when he could defy the shame of the world, and resolve to be a Christian in the face of vice and infidelity: he found the shortest way to conquer this foolish shame, was to renounce it at once: then it was easy to practise singularity amidst a profane multitude. And when he began to get courage enough to profess resolute piety without a blush, in the midst of such company as this, *Agathus* and *Eraсте* then permitted their son to travel abroad, and to see

see more of the world, under the protection of their daily prayers. His first tour was through the neighbouring counties of *England*; he afterward enlarged the circuit of his travels, till he had visited foreign nations, and learned the value of his own.

IN short, the restraints of his younger years were tempered with so much liberty, and managed with such prudence and tenderness, and these bonds of discipline were so gradually loosened, as fast as he grew wise enough to govern himself, that *Eugenio* always carried about with him an inward conviction of the great love and wisdom of his parents and his tutor. The humours of the child now and then felt some reluctance against the pious discipline of his elders; but now he is arrived at manhood, there is nothing that he looks back upon with greater satisfaction than the steps of their conduct, and the instances of his own submission. He often recounts these things with pleasure, as some of the chief favours of heaven, whereby he was guarded through all the dangers and follies of youth and childhood, and effectually kept, through divine grace operating by these happy means, from a thousand sorrows, and perhaps from everlasting ruin.

THOUGH he has been released some years from the strictness of paternal government, yet he still makes his parents his chosen friends :



friends : and though they cease to practise authority upon him and absolute command, yet he pays the utmost deference to their counsels, and to the first notice of their inclinations. You shall never find him resisting and debating against their desires and propensities in little common things of life, which are indifferent in themselves ; he thinks it carries in it too much contempt of those whom God and nature requires him to honour. In those instances of practice which they utterly forbid in their family, he bears so tender a regard to their peace, that he will scarcely ever allow himself in them, even when he cannot see sufficient reason to pronounce them unlawful. Nor does he pay this regard to his parents alone, but denies himself in some gratifications which he esteems innocent, out of regard to what he accounts the mistaken judgment of some pious persons with whom he converses and worships. They are *weak*, perhaps, in their austerities, but St. Paul has taught him, that *the strong ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves to the offence of the church of God*. This he observed to be the constant practice of *Agathus* and *Eraсте*, and he maintains a great regard to the examples of so much piety and goodness, even though his reason does not lead him always to embrace their opinions. Whensoever he en-



ters into an important action of life, he takes a filial pleasure to seek advice from his worthy parents, and it is uneasy to him to attempt any thing of moment without it. He does not indeed universally practise all their sentiments, but he gains their consent to follow his own reason and choice.

SOME of the wild young gentlemen of the age may happen to laugh at him for being so much a boy still, and for shewing such subjection to the old folks, (as they call them :) with a scornful smile they bid him “ Break off his leading-strings, and “ cast away his yokes of bondage.” But for the most part he observes, that the same persons shake off all yokes at once, and at once break the bonds of nature, duty and religion : they pay but little regard to their superior in heaven, any more than to those on earth, and have forgotten God and their parents together. “ Nor will I ever be “ moved (says he) with the reproaches “ of those who make a jest of things sacred as well as civil, and treat their “ mother and their maker with the same “ contempt.”

## S E C T. XI.

*Of the proper Degrees of Liberty and Restraint in the Education of Daughters, illustrated by Examples.*

**I**T is necessary that youth should be laid under some restraint. When our inclinations are violent, and our judgment weak, it was a wise provision of God our creator, that we should be under the conduct of those who were born before us; and that we should be bound to obey them, who have an innate solicitude for our happiness, and are much fitter to judge for our advantage, than we ourselves can be in that early part of life.

BUT it may be said, liberty is so glorious a blessing, that surely it ought not utterly to be taken away from the young, lest their spirits be cramped and enslaved, and the growth of their souls so stunted by a narrow and severe restraint, that they act all their lives like children under age. Or sometimes a too rigid confinement will have the contrary effect, and make the impatience of youth break out beyond all bounds, as soon as ever they get the first relish of freedom.

BUT

BUT O how exceedingly difficult it is to hit the middle way ! How hard for parents to manage their own authority with so much gentleness, and to regulate the liberties of their children with so wise a discipline, as to fall into neither extreme, nor give unhappy occasion for censure ! though I have spoken my opinion freely, that it is safer to err on the side of restraint, than of excessive indulgence.

*ANTIGONE* had an excellent mother, but she died young : *Antigone*, with her elder sister, from their very infancy, were placed under a grandmother's care. The good old gentlewoman trained them up precisely in the forms in which she herself was educated, when the modes of breeding had (it must be confessed) too much narrowness and austerity. She gave them all the good instructions she had received from her ancestors, and would scarcely ever suffer them to be out of her sight. She saw the eldest well married at five and twenty, and settled in a course of virtue and religion : she found her zeal and pious care attended with success in several of her posterity, and she departed this life in peace.

BUT unhappy *Antigone* took a different turn : she was let loose into the world with all her possessions and powers in her own hand ; and falling into vain company,  
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she

she got such a taste of unbounded liberty and modish vices, that she could never reflect upon the method of her own education without angry remarks or ridicule.

WHEN she came to have children of her own, she still retained the resentment which she had conceived at the conduct of her grandmother, and therefore she resolved that her daughters should be bred up in the other extreme.

“ IN my younger times (said she) we  
 “ were kept hard to the labour of the  
 “ needle, and spent six hours a day at it,  
 “ as though I were to get my bread by my  
 “ fingers ends; but a little of that busi-  
 “ ness shall serve these children, for their  
 “ father has left them good fortunes of  
 “ their own.

“ WE were not suffered to read any thing  
 “ but the Bible and sermon-books; but I  
 “ shall teach mine politer lessons out of  
 “ plays and romances, that they may be  
 “ acquainted with the world betimes.

“ MY eldest sister was scarcely ever allow-  
 “ ed to speak in company till she was mar-  
 “ ried, and it was a tiresome length of  
 “ years before that day came. The old  
 “ proverb ran thus, *That a maiden must be*  
 “ *seen, and not heard*: but I hope my little  
 “ daughters will not be dumb.

“ WE were always confined to dwell at  
 “ home, unless some extraordinary occa-



SECT. XI. *and Restraint in Daughters.* 227

“ sion called us abroad, perhaps once in a  
“ month, or twice in a summer. We  
“ were taught to play the good housewife  
“ in the kitchen and the pastry, and were  
“ well instructed in the conduct of the  
“ broom and duster; but we knew no-  
“ thing of the mode of the court, and the  
“ diversions of the town. I should be  
“ ashamed to see these young creatures  
“ that are under my care, so awkward in  
“ company at fourteen, as I was at four  
“ and twenty.”

AND thus *Antigone* brought up her young family of daughters agreeable to her own loose notions; for she had formed her sentiments of education merely from the aversion she had conceived to the way of her elders, and chose the very reverse of their conduct for her rule, because their piety and wisdom had a little allay of rigour and stiffness attending it.

THE young things, under their mother's eye, could manage the tea-table at ten years old, when they could hardly read a chapter in the New Testament. At fourteen they learned the airs of the world; they gad abroad at their pleasure, and will hardly suffer *Antigone* to direct them or go with them; they despise the old woman betimes, for they can visit without her attendance, and prattle abundantly without her prompting.

SHE led or sent them to the playhouse twice or thrice a week, where a great part of their natural modesty is worn off and forgotten: *modesty, the guard of youthful virtue!* they can talk love-stories out of *Cleopatra*; they are well practised already in the arts of scandal, and for want of better furniture of mind, emptiness and impertinence, ribands and fashions, gay gentlemen and wanton songs, ever dwell upon their tongues. They have been taught so little to set a guard upon themselves, that their virtue is much suspected. But (be that as it will) they are seized and married before sixteen, being tempted away to bind themselves for life, to a laced coat and a fashionable wig. Thus children set up at once to govern a family; but so ignorant in all those concerns, that, from the garret to the kitchen, the whole house is entirely ruled by the humour of the servants, because the young mistress knows not how to instruct or correct them. There is neither religion nor prudence among them, at home or abroad. Thus they make haste to ruin and misery in this world, without thought or hope of the world to come, and the heaven or the hell that await us there.

*ANTIGONE* sees her own mistake too late; and though she has not so just a sense and horror of their loose and profane life as would become her years, yet she is vexed  
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to see herself neglected so soon, and scorned by her own children ; but she confesses, with a sigh, that she has led them the way, by laughing so often at her good old grandmother.

How much wiser is *Phronissa* in the education that she gives her daughters, who maintains a happy medium between the severity of the last age, and the wild licence of this ! She manages her conduct towards them with such an admirable felicity, that though she confines them within the sacred limits of virtue and religion, yet they have not a wish beyond the liberties which they daily enjoy.

*PHRONISSA*, when her daughters were little children, used to spend some hours daily in the nursery, and taught the young creatures to recite many a pretty passage out of the Bible, before they were capable of reading it themselves ; yet at six years old they read the scriptures with ease, and then they rejoiced to find the same stories in *Genesis* and in the *Gospels* which their mother had taught them before. As their years advanced, they were admitted into the best conversation, and had such books put into their hands, as might acquaint them with the rules of prudence and piety in an easy and familiar way : the reading the lives of eminent persons who were examples of this kind, was one of the daily

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methods



methods she used, at once to instruct and entertain them. By such means, and others which she wisely adapted to their advancing age, they had all the knowledge bestowed upon them that could be supposed proper for women, and that might render their character honourable and useful in the world.

As for plays and romances, they were ever bred up in a just apprehension of the danger and mischief of them: *Collier's View of the Stage* was early put into their closets, that they might learn there the hideous immorality and profaneness of the *English comedies*; and by the way, he forbids us to hope from our tragical poets a much safer entertainment. There they might read enough to forbid their attendances on the playhouse, and see the poison exposed, without danger of the infection. The servants that waited on them, and the books that were left within their reach, were such as never corrupted their minds with impure words or images.

LONG has *Phronissa* known that domestic virtues are the business and the honour of her sex. Nature and history agree to assure her, that the conduct of the household is committed to the women, and the precepts and examples of scripture confirm it. She educated her daughters therefore in constant acquaintance with all family affairs, and they knew betimes what belonged to



to the provisions of the table, and the furniture of every room, Though her circumstances were considerable in the world, yet, by her own example, she made her children know, that a frequent visit to the kitchen was not beneath their state, nor the common menial affairs too mean for their notice ; that they might be able hereafter to manage their own house, and not be directed, imposed upon, and perhaps ridiculed by their own servants.

THEY were initiated early in the science of the needle, and were bred up skilful in all the plain and flowery arts of it ; but it was never made a task nor a toil to them, nor did they waste their hours in those nice and tedious works, which cost our female ancestors seven years of their life, and stitches without number. To render this exercise pleasant, one of them always entertained the company with some useful author, while the rest were at work ; every one had freedom and encouragement to start what question she pleased, and to make any remarks on the present subject ; that reading, working and conversation, might fill up the hour with variety and delight. Thus while their hands were making garments for themselves or for the poor, their minds were enriched with treasures of human and divine knowledge.

AT proper seasons the young ladies were instructed in the gayer accomplishments of their age: but they were taught to esteem the song and the dance, some of their meanest talents, because they are often forgotten in advanced years, and add but little to the virtue, the honour, or the happiness of life.

*PHRONISSA* herself was sprightly and active, and she abhorred a slothful and lazy humour; therefore she constantly found out some inviting and agreeable employment for her daughters, that they might hate idleness as a mischievous vice, and be trained up to an active and useful life. Yet she perpetually insinuated the superior delights of the closet, and tempted them by all divine methods to the love of devout retirement. Whensoever she seemed to distinguish them by any peculiar favours, it was generally upon some new indication of early piety, or some young practice of a self-denying virtue.

THEY were taught to receive visits in form, agreeable to the age; and though they knew the modes of dress sufficiently to secure them from any thing awkward or unfashionable, yet their minds were so well furnished with richer variety, that they had no need to run to those poor and trivial topics, to exclude silence and dulness from the drawing-room. They would  
not

not give such an affront to the understandings of the ladies their visitants, as to treat them with such meanness and impertinence; therefore all this sort of conversation was reserved, almost entirely, for the minutes appointed to the milliner and the tire-woman.

HERE I must publish it to their honour, to provoke the sex to imitation, that though they comported with the fashion in all their ornaments, so far as the fashion was modest, and could approve itself to reason or religion, yet *Phronissa* would not suffer their younger judgments so far to be imposed on by custom, as that the mode should be entirely the measure of all decency to them. She knew there is such a thing as natural harmony and agreeableness; in the beauties of colour and figure her delicacy of taste was exquisite; and where the mode run counter to nature, though she indulged her daughters to follow it in some innocent instances, because she loved not to be remarkably singular in things of indifference, yet she took care always to teach them to distinguish gay folly and affected extravagance from natural decencies, both in furniture and in dress: Their rank in the world was eminent, but they never appeared the first, nor the highest in any new-fangled forms of attire. By her wise example and instructions she had

so



so formed their minds, as to be able to see garments more gaudy, and even more modish than their own, without envy or wishes. They could bear to find a trimming set on a little awry, or the plait of a garment ill-disposed, without making the whole house and the day uneasy, and the sun and heavens smile upon them in vain.

*PHRONISSA* taught them the happy art of managing a visit with some useful improvement of the hour, and without offence. If a word of scandal occurred in company, it was soon diverted or suppressed. The children were charged to speak well of their neighbours as far as truth would admit, and to be silent as to any thing further: but when the poor or the deformed were mentioned in discourse, the aged, the lame, or the blind, those objects were handled with the utmost tenderness: nothing could displease *Phronissa* more than to hear a jest thrown upon natural infirmities: she thought there was something sacred in misery, and it was not to be touched with a rude hand. All reproach and satire of this kind was for ever banished where she came; and if ever raillery was indulged, vice and wilful folly were the constant subjects of it.

PERSONS of distinguished characters she always distinguished in her respect, and trained up her family to pay the same civilities.



vilities. Whensoever she named her own parents it was with high veneration and love, and thereby she naturally led her children to give due honour to all their superior relatives.

THOUGH it is the fashion of the age to laugh at the priesthood in all forms, and to teach every boy to scoff at a minister, *Phronissa* paid double honours to them who laboured in the word and doctrine, where their personal behaviour upheld the dignity of their office; for she was perswaded *Saint Paul* was a better director than the gay gentlemen of the mode. 1 *Tim.* v. 17. Besides she wisely considered, that a contempt of their persons would necessarily bring with it a contempt of all their ministrations; and then she might carry her daughters to the church as much as she pleased, but preaching and praying, and all sacred things, would grow despicable and useless when they had first learned to make a jest of the preacher.

BUT are these young ladies always confined at home? Are they never suffered to see the world? Yes, and sometimes without the guard of a mother too; though *Phronissa* is so well beloved by her children, that they would very seldom choose to go without her. Their souls are inlaid betimes with the principles of virtue and prudence; these are their constant guard; nor do they  
ever

ever wish to make a visit where their mother has reason to suspect their safety.

THEY have freedom given them in all the common affairs of life to choose for themselves, but they take pleasure, for the most part, in referring the choice back again to their elders. *Phronissa* has managed the restraint of their younger years with so much reason and love, that they have seemed all their lives to know nothing but liberty; an admonition of their parents meets with cheerful compliance, and is never debated. A wish or desire has the same power over them now, as a command had in their infancy and childhood; for the command was ever dressed in the softest language of authority, and this made every act of obedience a delight, till it became an habitual pleasure.

IN short, they have been educated with such discretion, tenderness and piety, as have laid a foundation to make them happy and useful in the rising age: their parents with pleasure view the growing prospect, and return daily thanks to Almighty God, whose blessing has attended their watchful cares, and has thus far answered their most fervent devotions,

R E M N A N T S

O F

T I M E,

EMPLOYED IN

PROSE AND VERSE:

O R,

Short ESSAYS and COMPOSURES

O N

V A R I O U S S U B J E C T S.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

*Dr. Watts's opinion about publishing these papers, appears in the following Advertisement prefixed to them by himself.*

THESE papers were written at several seasons and intervals of leisure, and on various occasions arising through the greatest part of my life. Many of them were designed to be published among the *Reliquiæ Juveniles*, but for some reason or other, not worth present notice, were laid by at that time. Whether I shall ever publish them I know not, though far the greatest part of them have long stood corrected among my manuscripts; nor do I suppose many of them inferior to those Essays and Remarks of this kind, which have before appeared in the world with some acceptance. If they are not published in my life-time, my worthy friends, who have the care of my papers, may leave out what they please.

I. W.

July 3, 1740.

R E M-



R E M N A N T S

O F

T I M E,

EMPLOYED IN

P R O S E and V E R S E, &c.

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I. *Justice and Grace.*

**N**EVER was there any hour since the creation of all things, nor ever will be till the last conflagration, wherein the holy God, so remarkably displayed his justice and his grace, as that hour, that saw our Lord *Jesus Christ* hanging upon the cross, forsaken of his Father, and expiring. What a dreadful glory was given to vindictive justice, when the great and terrible God made the soul of his own Son, a painful sacrifice for sin ! What an amazing

amazing instance of grace, that he should redeem such worthless sinners as we are from the vengeance, by exposing his beloved Son to it! When I view the severity or the compassion of that hour, my thoughts are lost in astonishment: it is not for me, it is not for *Paul* or *Apollos*, it is not for the tongue of men or angels to say which was greatest, the compassion or the severity. Humble adoration becomes us best, and a thankful acceptance of the pardon that was purchased at so dear a rate.

Next to this I know not a more eminent display of terror and mercy, than the dying hour of a pious but desponding christian, under the tumultuous and disquieting temptations of the devil.

See within those curtains a person of faith and serious piety, but of a melancholy constitution, and expecting death. While his flesh is tortured with sharp agonies and terribly convulsed, a ghastly horror sits on his countenance, and he groans under extreme anguish. Behold the man, a favourite of heaven, a child of light, assaulted with the darts of hell, and his soul surrounded with thick darkness: all his sins stand in dreadful array before him, and threaten him with the execution of all the curses in the Bible. Though he loves God with all his heart, he is in the dark, he  
knows

knows it not, nor can he believe that God has any love for him ; and though he cannot utterly let go his hold of his Saviour and the gospel, yet in his own apprehension he is abandoned both of the Father and the Son. In every new pang that he feels, his own fears persuade him that the gates of hell are now opening upon him : he hangs hovering over the burning pit, and at the last gasp of life, when he seems to be sinking into eternal death, he quits the body with all its sad circumstances, and feels himself safe in the arms of his Saviour, and in the presence of his God.

What amazing transport ! What agreeable surprise ! not to be uttered by the words of our scanty mortal language, nor conceived but by the person who feels it. The body indeed, which was the habitation of so pious a spirit, is demolished at once : behold the lifeless carcase ; it makes haste to putrefaction. The released soul in extasy feels and surveys its own happiness, appears before the throne, is acknowledged there as one of the Sons of God, and invested with the glories of the upper world. Sorrows and sins, guilt, fetters and darkness vanish for ever : It exults in liberty and light, and dwells for ever under the smiles of God.

What was it could provoke the wise and gracious God to permit the wicked spirit to

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vex



vex one of his own children at this rate, and to deal so severely with the man whom he loves? to expose that soul to exquisite anguish in the flesh which he designed the same day to make a partner with blessed spirits? To express in one hour so much terror and so much mercy?

St. Paul will give a short and plain answer to this enquiry. *Rom. viii. 10. The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* Hence that anguish, those agonies and convulsions in the sinful flesh that must die, and these will be felt in some measure by the partner-spirit; though that spirit being vested with divine righteousness, or justified in the sight of God, shall survive these agonies in a peaceful immortality. Though the sufferings of the Son of God have redeemed it from an everlasting hell, yet it becomes the offended Majesty of heaven sometimes to give sensible instances what misery the pardoned sinner has deserved; and the moment that he receives him into full blessedness, may, on some accounts, be the fittest to make a display of all his terror, that the soul may have the full taste of felicity, and pay the higher honours to recovering grace. The demolition of the earthly tabernacle with all the pangs and the groans that attend it, are a shadow of that vengeance which was due even to the best of saints: it is fit we should



should see the picture of vindictive justice, before we are taken into the arms of eternal mercy.

Besides, there may be another reason that renders the dying hour of this man more dreadful too: Perhaps he had walked unwatchfully before God, and had given too much indulgence to some congenial iniquity, some vice that easily beset him; now it becomes the great God to write his own hatred of sin in deep and piercing characters sometimes on his own children, that he may let the world know that he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity any where without resentment. The man had *built much hay and stubble upon the divine foundation Christ Jesus*, and it was proper that he should *be saved so as by fire.* I Cor. iii. 15.

Will the Papist therefore attempt to support the structure of his *purgatory* upon such a text as this? An useless structure, and a vain attempt! That place was erected by the superstitious fancy of men, to purge out the sins of a dead man by his own sufferings, and to make him fit for heaven in times hereafter; as though the atoning blood of *Christ* were not sufficient for complete pardon, or the sanctifying work of the *Spirit* were imperfect even after death. Whereas the design of God in some such instances of terror, is chiefly to

give now-and-then an example to survivors in this life, how highly he is displeased with sin, and to discourage his own people from an indulgence of the works of the flesh. Now this end could not be attained by all the pains of their pretended *purgatory*, even though it were a real place of torment, because it is so invisible and unknown.

But whatsoever sorrows the dying christian sustains in the wise administrations of Providence; it is by no means to make compensation to God for sin; the atoning work of *Christ* is complete still, and the sanctifying work of the *Spirit* perfect as soon as the soul is dismissed from earth; therefore it has an entrance into full blessedness, such as becomes a God infinite in mercy to bestow on a penitent sinner, presented before the throne in the name and righteousness of his own Son. *We are complete in him, Col. ii. 10.* By him made perfectly acceptable to God at our death, we are filled with all grace, and introduced into complete glory.

## II. *The Death of a young Son.*

### *In a Letter to a Friend.*

MADAM, it has been the delight and practice of the pious in all ages, to talk in the words of scripture; and in the language

language of their God: the images of that book are bright and beautiful; and where they happily correspond with any present providence, there is a certain divine pleasure in the parallel. The *Jews* have ever used it as a fashionable style, and it has always been the custom of *Christians* in the most religious times; till iniquity and profaneness called it *cant* and *fanaticism*. The *Evangelists* and the *Apostles* have justified the practice; those later inspired authors have often indulged it; even where the Prophet, or first writer of the text, had quite another subject in view; And though an *allusion* to the words of scripture will by no means stand in the place of a proper exposition, yet it carries something divine and affecting in it; and by this means it may shine in a sermon, or a familiar epistle, and make a pleasing *similitude*. Accept then a few hints of consolation from a part of scripture, which by an easy turn of thought, may be applied to your case.

Rev. XII. 1. *A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, v. 2. Being with child, travailed in birth, v. 5. And she brought forth a man child, and it was caught up to God and his throne, v. 6. And the woman had a place prepared of God in the wilderness, v. 14. To be nourished for a time and times, v. 9. But the great dragon that was cast out of heaven, the old serpent*



*called the Devil and Satan, v. 13. persecuted the woman, v. 15. And cast out of his mouth water as a flood, v. 17. And went to make war with the remnant of her seed.*

Thus far the words of scripture.

Now, madam, if you have put on *Christ*, and are clothed by faith with the Sun of Righteousness; if you are drest in the shining graces of heaven, and have the pale and changing glories of this world under your feet, then you may be assured the child that you have brought forth is not lost, but is caught up to God and his throne, by virtue of that extensive covenant which includes sincere christians and their offspring together. Mourn not therefore for your son who is with God, but rather for yourself, who are yet in the wilderness of this world, where the old serpent has so much power; where he will persecute you with the flood of his temptations, if possible to carry you away with them; but I trust God has prepared a place for your safety, even his church, his gospel, his own everlasting arms.

Yet shall the serpent make war with the remnant of your seed; your little daughter that remains in the wilderness must go through this war, and be exposed to these temptations. O turn your tears from your son, into pity and prayer for yourself and  
your



your daughter, that ye may never be carried away by these floods; but when the times are past which God has appointed for your abode and nourishment in the wilderness, you may rejoice to find yourself, with all your offspring, in everlasting safety before the throne of God. *Amen.*

*So prays your affectionate, &c.*

*May 2, 1719.*

*I. W.*

III. *Heathen Poesy Christianized.* 1736.

**I**T is a piece of ancient and sacred history which *Moses* informs us of, that when the tribes of *Israel* departed from the land of *Egypt*, they borrowed of their neighbours gold and jewels, by the appointment of God, for the decoration of their sacrifices and solemn worship, when they should arrive at the appointed place in the wilderness. God himself taught his people how the richest of metals which had ever been abused to the worship of idols, might be purified by the fire, and being melted up into a new form, might be consecrated to the service of the living God, and add to the magnificence and grandeur of his tabernacle and temple. Such are some of the poetical writings of the ancient *Heathens*; They have a great deal of native

R. 4

beauty

beauty and lustre in them, and through some happy turn given them by the pen of a christian poet, may be transformed into divine meditations, and may assist the devout and pious soul in several parts of the christian life and worship.

Amongst all the rest of the *Pagan* writers, I know none so fit for this service as the Odes of *Horace*, as vile a sinner as he was. Their manner of composure comes nearer the spirit and force of the Psalms of *David* than any other; and as we take the devotions of the *Jewish* king, and bring them into our *Christian* churches, by changing the scene and the chronology, and superadding some of the glories of the gospel, so the representation of some of the *Heathen Virtues*, by a little more labour, may be changed into *Christian Graces*, or at least into the image of them, so far as human power can reach. One day musing on this subject, I made an experiment on the two last stanzas of Ode 29. Book III.

*Non meum est, si mugiat Africis  
Malus procellis, ad miseras preces  
Decurrere, & votis pacisci,  
Ne Cypriæ Tyriæque merces  
Addant avaro divitias mari.  
Tunc me biremis præsidio scaphæ,  
Tutum per Ægeos tumultus  
Aura feret, geminusque Pollux.*

*The*

*The British Fisherman.*

I.

Let *Spain's* proud traders, when the mast  
Bends groaning to the stormy blast,  
Run to their beads with wretched plaints,  
And vow and bargain with their saints,  
Lest *Turkish* silks, or *Tyrian* wares,  
Sink in their drowning ship,  
Or the rich dust *Peru* prepares,  
Defraud their long projecting cares,  
And add new treasures to the greedy deep.

II.

My little skiff, that skims the shores,  
With half a sail, and two short oars,  
Provides me food in gentler waves:  
But if they gape in watry graves,  
I trust th' eternal pow'r, whose hand  
Hath swell'd the storm so high,  
To waft my boat, and me to land,  
Or give some angel swift command  
To bear the drowning sailor to the sky.

IV. *Redemption.*

I.

THE mighty frame of glorious grace,  
That brightest monument of praise  
That e'er the God of love design'd,  
Implies and fills my labouring mind.

II. Be-



## II.

Begin, my muse, the heavenly song,  
A burden for an angel's tongue :  
When *Gabriel* sounds these awful things,  
He tunes and summons all his strings,

## III.

Proclaim inimitable love :  
*Jesus*, the Lord of world's above,  
Puts off the beams of bright array,  
And veils the God in mortal clay.

## IV.

What black reproach defil'd his name,  
When with our sin he took our shame !  
The power whom kneeling angels blest  
Is made the impious rabble's jest.

## V.

He that distributes crowns and thrones,  
Hangs on a tree and bleeds and groans :  
The prince of life resigns his breath,  
The King of glory bows to death.

## VI.

But see the wonders of his power,  
He triumphs in his dying hour,  
And whilst by *Satan's* rage he fell,  
He dash'd the rising hopes of hell.

## VII.

Thus were the hosts of death subdu'd,  
And sin was drown'd in *Jesus'* blood ;  
Then he arose, and reigns above,  
And conquers sinners by his love.



If I could pursue all the wondrous atchievements of a dying and a rising Saviour in verse, as fast and as far as my thoughts sometimes attempt to trace them, I should lengthen this Ode to many stanzas, and yet at last I should lose both my thoughts and my verse amongst the unknown wonders of his glory, and the ages of eternity.

Who shall fulfil this boundless song?

What vain pretender dares?

The theme surmounts an angel's tongue,  
And Gabriel's harp despairs \*.

V. Complaint and Hope under great Pain. 1736.

I.

**L**ORD, I am pain'd; but I resign  
To thy superior will:  
'Tis grace, 'tis wisdom all divine,  
Appoints the pains I feel.

II.

Dark are thy ways of providence,  
While those that love thee groan:

\* Note. In this ode, there are three or four lines taken from Mr. Stennet's Sacramental Hymns, for when I found they express my thought and design in proper and beautiful language, I chose rather to borrow and acknowledge the debt, than to labour hard for worse lines, that I might have the poor pleasure of calling them my own.

Thy

Thy reasons lie conceal'd from sense,  
Mysterious and unknown.

## III.

Yet nature may have leave to speak,  
And plead before her God,  
Lest the o'er-burden'd heart should break  
Beneath thy heavy rod.

## IV.

Will nothing but such daily pain  
Secure my soul from hell?  
Canst thou not make my health attain  
Thy kind designs as well?

## V.

How shall my tongue proclaim thy grace  
While thus at home confin'd?  
What can I write, while painful flesh  
Hangs heavy on the mind?

## VI.

These groans and sighs and flowing tears  
Give my poor spirit ease,  
While ev'ry groan my father hears,  
And ev'ry tear he sees.

## VII.

Is not some smiling hour at hand  
With peace upon its wings?  
Give it, O God, thy swift command,  
With all the joys it brings.

VI. *On an Elegy, written by the Right Honourable the Countess of Hertford, on the Death of Mrs. Rowe. 1737.*

STRUCK with the sight of *Philomela's*  
urn  
*Eusebia* weeps, and calls her muse to mourn:  
While from her lips the tuneful sorrows  
fell  
The groves confess a rising *Philomel*.

VII. *Dr. Young's admirable Description of the Peacock enlarged.*

VIEW next the peacock: what bright  
glories run  
From plume to plume, and vary in the sun?  
Proudly he boasts, then to the heavenly ray,  
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day.  
Was it thy pencil, *Job*, divinely bold,  
Drest his rich form in azure, green, and  
gold?

Thy hand his crest with starry radiance  
crown'd,

Or spread his sweepy train? his train dis-  
dains the ground,

And kindles living lamps through all the  
spacious round.

Mark with what conscious state the bird  
displays

His native gems, and 'midst the waving  
blaze



On the slow step of majesty he moves,  
 Asserts his honours; and demands his loves.

VIII. *Vanity inscribed on all Things.*

**T**IME, like a long flowing stream, makes haste into eternity, and is for ever lost and swallowed up there; and while it is hastening to its period, it sweeps away all things with it which are not immortal. There is a limit appointed by providence, to the duration of all the pleasant and desirable scenes of life, to all the works of the hands of men, with all the glories and excellencies of animal nature, and all that is made of flesh and blood. Let us not doat upon any thing here below, for heaven hath inscribed vanity upon it. The moment is hastening when the decree of heaven shall be uttered, and providence shall pronounce upon every glory of the earth, *It's time shall be no longer.*

What is that stately *building*, that princely *palace*, which now entertains and amuses our sight with ranks of marble columns, and wide spreading arches, that gay edifice which enriches our imagination with a thousand royal ornaments, and a profusion of costly and glittering furniture? Time, and all its circling hours, with a swift wing are brushing it away; decay steals upon it insensibly, and a few years hence it

it



it shall lie in mouldering ruin and desolation. Unhappy possessor, if he has no better inheritance !

What are those fine and elegant *gardens*, those delightful walks, those gentle ascents and soft declining slopes, which raise and sink the eye by turns to a thousand vegetable pleasures ? How lovely are those sweet borders, and those growing varieties of bloom and fruit, which recal lost paradise to mind ? Those living *parterres* which regale the sense with vital fragrancy, and make glad the sight by their refreshing verdure and intermingled flowery beauties ? The scythe of time is passing over them all : they wither, they die away, they drop and vanish into dust ; their duration is short ; a few months deface all their yearly glories, and within a few years, perhaps all these rising terras-walks, these gentle verging declivities, shall lose all order and elegance, and become a rugged heap of ruins : those well-distinguished borders and *parterres* shall be levelled in confusion, and thrown into common earth again, for the ox and the ass to graze upon them. Unhappy man, who possesses this agreeable spot of ground, if he has no paradise more durable than this !

And no wonder that these labours of the hands of men should perish, when even the works of God are perishable.

What

What are these *visible heavens*, these *lower skies*, and this globe of *earth*? They are indeed the glorious workmanship of the Almighty. But they are waxing old, and waiting their period too, when the angel shall pronounce upon them that *Time shall be no more*. The heavens *shall be folded up as a vesture*, the elements of the lower world *shall melt with fervent heat*, and the earth, and all the works thereof, *shall be burnt up with fire*. May the unruinable world be but my portion, and the heaven of heavens my inheritance, which is built for an eternal mansion for the sons of God: these buildings shall out-live time and nature, and exist through unknown ages of felicity!

What have we mortals to be proud of in our present state, when every human glory is so fugitive and fading? Let the brightest and the best of us say to ourselves; that *we are but dust and vanity*.

Is my body formed upon a graceful model? Are my limbs well turned, and my complexion better coloured than my neighbours? Beauty, even in perfection, is of the shortest date; a few years will inform me that its bloom vanishes, its flower withers, its lustre grows dim, its duration shall be no longer; and if life be prolonged, yet the pride and glory of it is for ever lost in age and wrinkles: or perhaps our vanity meets

a speedier fate. Death and the grave, with a sovereign and irresistible command, summon the brightest as well as the coarsest pieces of human nature, to lie down early in their cold embraces; and, at last they must all mix together, among worms and corruption. *Æsop* the deformed, and *Helena* the fair, are lost and undistinguished in common earth. Nature in its gayest bloom, is but a painted vanity.

Are my nerves well strung and vigorous? Is my activity and strength far superior to my neighbours in the days of youth? But youth hath its appointed limit: age steals upon it, unstrings the nerves, and makes the force of nature languish into infirmity and feebleness. *Sampson* and *Goliath* would have lost their boasted advantages of stature and their brawny limbs, in the course of half a century, though the one had escaped the sling of *David*, and the other the vengeance of his own hands in the ruin of *Dagon's* temple. Man, in his best estate, is a flying shadow and vanity.

Even those nobler powers of human life, which seem to have something angelical in them, I mean the powers of wit and fancy, gay imagination, and capacious memory, they are all subject to the same laws of decay and death. What though they can raise and animate beautiful scenes in a moment, and in imitation of creating power,



can spread bright appearances and new worlds before the senses and the souls of their friends? What though they can entertain the better part of mankind, the refined and polite world with high delight and rapture? These scenes of rapturous delight, grow flat and old by a frequent review, and the very powers that raised them grow feeble apace. What though they can give immortal applause and fame to their possessors! It is but the immortality of an empty name, a mere succession of the breath of men; and it is a short sort of immortality too, which must die and perish when this world perishes. A poor shadow of duration indeed, while the real period of these powers is hastening every day; they languish and die as fast as animal nature which has a large share in them, makes haste to its decay; and the time of their exercise shall shortly be no more.

In vain the aged poet or the painter, would call up the muse and genius of their youth, and summon all the arts of their imagination; to spread and dress out some visionary scene: in vain the elegant orator would recal the bold and masterly figures, and all those flowery images which gave ardor, grace, and dignity to his younger compositions, and charm'd every ear: they are gone, they are fled beyond the reach of their owner's call: their time is past,  
they



they are vanished and lost beyond all hope of recovery.

The God of nature has pronounced an unpassable period, upon all the powers and pleasures, and glories of this mortal state. Let us then be afraid to make any of them our boast or our happiness; but point our affections to those diviner objects, whose nature is everlasting; let us seek those religious attainments, and those new-created powers of a sanctified mind, concerning which it shall never be pronounced, that their *Time shall be no longer*.

O may every one of us be humbly content, at the call of heaven, to part with all that is pleasing or magnificent here on earth; let us resign even these agreeable talents when the God of Nature demands; and when the hour arrives, that shall close our eyes to all visible things, and lay our fleshly structure in the dust; let us yield up our whole selves to the hands of our Creator, who shall reserve our spirits with himself; and while we cheerfully give up all that was mortal to the grave, we may lie down full of the joyful hope of a rising immortality. New and unknown powers and glories, brighter flames of imagination, richer scenes of wit and fancy, and diviner talents are preparing for us, when we shall awake from the dust; and the mind itself shall have all its faculties in a

sublime state of improvement. These shall make us equal, if not superior, to angels; for we are nearer a-kin to the Son of God than they are, and therefore we shall be made more like him.

IX. *The Rake reformed in the house of mourning.*

**F**LORINO was young and idle; he gave himself up to all the diversions of the town, and roved wild among the pleasures of sense; nor did he confine himself within the limits of virtue, or withhold his heart from any forbidden joy. Often hath he been heard to ridicule marriage, and affirm that no man can mourn heartily for a dead wife; for then he hath leave by the law to choose a new companion, to riot in all the gayer scenes of a new courtship, and perhaps to advance his fortune too.

When he heard of the death of *Serena*, “ Well, said he, I will go visit my friend  
“ *Lucius*, and rally him a little on this oc-  
“ casion.” He went the next day in all the wantonness of his heart to fulfil his design, inhuman and barbarous as it was, and to sport with solemn sorrow. But when *Lucius* appeared, the man of gaiety was strangely surprised; he saw such a sincere and inimitable distress sitting on his countenance, and discovering itself in every air  
and

and action, that he dropt his cruel purpose, his soul began to melt, and he assumed the comforter.

*Florino's* methods of consolation were all drawn from two topics: Some from *fate* and *necessity*, advising an heroic indolence about unavoidable events, which are past and cannot be reversed; and some were derived from the various amusements of life which call the soul abroad, and divide and scatter the thoughts, and suffer not the mind to attend to its inward anguish.

“ Come, *Lucius*, said he, come, smoothe  
“ your brows a little, and brighten up for  
“ an hour or two: Come along with me to  
“ a concert this evening, where you shall  
“ hear some of the best pieces of music that  
“ were ever composed, and performed by  
“ some of the best hands that ever touch-  
“ ed an instrument. To-morrow I will  
“ wait on you to the play, or if you please,  
“ to the new opera, where the scenes are  
“ so surprizing and so gay, they would al-  
“ most tempt an old hermit from his be-  
“ loved cell, and call back his years to  
“ three and twenty. Come, my friend,  
“ What have the living to do with the  
“ dead? Do but forget your grievances a  
“ little and they will die too: Come, shake  
“ off the spleen, divert your heart with the  
“ entertainments of wit and melody, and  
“ call away your fancy from these gloomy



“and useless contemplations.” Thus he ran on in his own way of talking, and opened to his mourning friend the best springs of comfort that he was acquainted with.

*Lucius* endured this prattle as long as he was able to endure it, but it had no manner of influence to stanch the bleeding wound, or to abate his smarting sorrows. His pain waxed more intense by such sort of applications, and the grief soon grew too unruly to contain itself.

*Lucius* then asked leave to retire a little : *Florino* followed him softly at a distance to the door of his closet, where indeed he observed not any of the rules of civility or just decency, but placed himself near enough to listen how the passion took its vent : and there he heard the distressed *Lucius* mourning over *Serena*’s death in such language as this.

What did *Florino* talk about ? *Necessity* and *Fate* ? Alas, this is my misery, that so painful an event cannot be reversed, that the Divine Will has made it *fate*, and there is a *necessity* of my enduring it.

*Plays* and *music* and *operas* ! What poor trifles are these to give ease to a wounded heart ! To a heart that has lost its choicest half ! A heart that lies bleeding in deep anguish under such a keen parting stroke, and the long, long absence of my *Serena* ! She is gone.—The desire of my eyes and  
the

the delight of my soul is gone.—The first of earthly comforts, and the best of mortal blessings.—She is gone, and she has taken with her all that was pleasant, all that could brighten the gloomy hours of life, that could soften the cares and relieve the burdens of it. She is gone, and the best portion and joy of my life is departed. Will she never return, never come back and bless my eyes again? No; never, never.—She will no more come back to visit this wretched world, and to dry these weeping eyes. That best portion of my life, that dearest blessing is gone, and will return no more. Sorrows in long succession await me while I live; all my future days are marked out for grief and darkness.

Let the man, who feels no inward pain at the loss of such a partner, dress his dwelling in black shades and dismal formalities: Let him draw the curtains of darkness around him, and teach his chambers a fashionable mourning: but real anguish of heart needs none of these modish and dissembled sorrows. My soul is hung round with dark images in all her apartments, and every scene is sincere lamentation and death.

I thought once I had some pretences to the courage of a man: but this is a season of untried distress: I now shudder at a thought, I start at shadows, my spirits are

sunk, and horror has taken hold of me. I feel passions in me that were unknown before; love has its own proper grief and its peculiar anguish. Mourning love has those agonies and those sinkings of spirit, which are known only to bereaved and virtuous lovers.

I stalk about like a ghost, in musing silence, till the gathering sorrow grows too big for the heart, and bursts out into weak and unmanly wailings. Strange and overwhelming stroke indeed! It has melted all the man within me down to softness: my nature is gone back to childhood again: I would maintain the dignity of my age and my sex, but these eyes rebel and betray me; the eye-lids are full, they overflow; the drops of love and grief trickle down my cheeks, and plow the furrows of age there before their time.

How often in a day are these sluices opened afresh? The sight of every friend that knew her calls up my weakness and betrays my frailty. I am quite ashamed of myself. What shall I do? Is there nothing of manhood left about my heart? I will resist the passion, I will struggle with nature, I will grow indolent and forbid my tears. Alas, poor feeble wretch that I am! In vain I struggle; in vain I resist: The assumed indolence vanishes; the real passion works within, it swells and bears down all before



before it: the torrent rises and prevails hourly, and nature will have its way. Even the Son of God, when he became man, was found weeping at the tomb of a darling friend. *Lazarus* died, and *Jesus* wept.

O my soul, what shall I do to relieve this heart-ache? How shall I cure this painful sensibility? Is there no opiate will reach it? Whither shall I go to leave my sorrows behind me? I wander from one room to another, and wherever I go, I still seem to seek her, but I miss her still. My imagination flatters me with her lovely image, and tempts me to doubt, Is she dead indeed? My fond imagination would fain forget her death-bed, and impose upon my hope that I shall find her somewhere. I visit her apartment, I steal into her closet: in days past, when I have missed her in the parlour, how often have I found the dear creature in that beloved corner of the house, that sweet place of divine retirement and converse with heaven? But even that closet is empty now. I go thither, and I retire in disappointment and confusion.

Methinks I should meet her in some of her walks, in some of her family cares, or her innocent amusements: I should see her face, methinks, I should hear her voice, and exchange a tender word or two——  
Ah, foolish roving of a distressed and disquieted fancy! Every room is empty and  
silent;

silent; closet, parlours, chambers, all empty, all silent; and that very silence and emptiness proclaim my sorrows: even emptiness and deep silence join to confess the painful loss.

Shall I try then to put her quite out of my thoughts, since she will come no more within the reach of my senses? Shall I loosen the fair picture, and drop it from my heart, since the fairer original is for ever gone? Go, then, fair picture, go from my bosom, and appear to my soul no more. Hard word! but it must be done: go, depart thou dearest form; thou most lovely of images, go from my heart; thy presence is now too painful in that tender part of me. O unhappy word! Thy presence painful? A dismal change indeed! When thou wert wont to arise and shew thyself there, graces and joys were wont to arise and shew themselves: graces and joys went always with her, nor did her image ever appear without them, till that dark and bitter day that spread the vail of death over her: but her image, drest in that gloomy vail, hath lost all the attendant joys and graces. Let her picture vanish from my soul then, since it has lost those endearing attendants: let it vanish away into forgetfulness, for death has robbed it of every grace and every joy.

Yet

Yet stay a little there, tempting image, let me once more survey thee : stay a little moment, and let me take one last glance, one solemn farewell. Is there not something in the resemblance of her too lovely, still to have it quite banished from my heart ? Can I set my soul at work to try to forget her ? Can I deal so unkindly with one, who would never have forgotten me ? Can my soul live without her image on it ? Is it not stamp'd there too deep ever to be effaced ?

Methinks I feel all my heart-strings wrapt around her, and grow so fast to that dear picture in my fancy, they seem to be rooted there. To be divided from it is to die. Why should I then pursue so vain and fruitless an attempt ? What ? forget myself ? forget my life ? No ; it cannot be ; nor can I bear to think of such a rude and cruel treatment of an image so much deserving and so much beloved. Neither passion nor reason permits me to forget her, nor is it within my power. She is present almost to all my thoughts : she is with me in all my motions ; grief has arrows with her name upon them, that stick as fast and as deep as those of love ; they cleave to my vitals wheresoever I go, but with a quicker sensation, and a keener pain. Alas, it is love and grief together that have  
shot



shot all their arrows into my heart, and filled every vein with acute anguish and long distress.

Whither then shall I fly to find solace and ease? I cannot depart from myself: I cannot abandon these tender and smarting sensations. Shall I quit the house and all the apartments of it which renew her dear memory? Shall I rove in these open fields which lie near my dwelling, and spread wide their pleasing verdure? Shall I give my soul a loose to all nature that smiles around me, or shall I confine my daily walk to this shady and delightful garden? Oh, no; neither of these will relieve my anguish. *Serena* has too often blessed me with her company, both in this garden and in these fields. Her very name seems written on every tree: I shall think of her, and fancy I see her in every step I take. Here she prest the grass with her feet, here she gathered violets and roses and refreshing herbs, and gave the lovely collection of sweetness into my hand. But alas! the sweetest violet and the fairest rose is fallen, is withered, and is no more. Farewel then, ye fields and gardens, with all your varieties of green and flowery joys! Ye are all a desert, a barren wilderness, since *Serena* has for ever left you, and will be seen there no more.

But

But can friends do nothing to comfort a mourner? Come, my wife friends, surround me, and divert my cares with your agreeable conversation. Can books afford no relief? Come, my books, ye volumes of knowledge, ye labours of the learned dead; come, fill up my hours with some soothing amusement. I call my better friends about me, I fly to the heroes and the philosophers of ancient ages, to employ my soul among them. But alas! neither learning nor books amuse me, nor green and smiling prospects of nature delight me, nor conversation with my wisest and best friends can entertain me in these dark and melancholy hours. Solitude, solitude, in some unseen corner, some lonely grotto, overgrown with shades, this is my dearest choice. Let me dwell in my beloved solitude, where none shall come near me; midnight and solitude are the most pleasing things to a man who is weary of daylight, and of all the scenes of this visible and busy world. I would eat and drink and dwell alone, though this lonesome humour soothes and gratifies the painful passion, and gives me up to the tyranny of my sharpest sorrows. Strange mixture that I am made of! I mourn and grieve even to death, and yet I seem fond of nothing but grief and mourning.

Wo

Wo is me! Is there nothing on earth can divert, nothing relieve me? Then let my thoughts ascend to paradise and heaven, there I shall find her better part, and grief must not enter there. From this hour take a new turn; O my soul, and never think of *Serena* but as shining and rejoicing among the spirits of the blest, and in the presence of her God. Rise often in holy meditation to the celestial world, and betake thyself to more intense piety: Devotion has wings that will bear thee high above the tumults and passions of lower life: devotion will direct and speed thy flight to a country of brighter scenes.

Shake off this earthliness of mind, this dust of mortality that hangs about thee; rise upward often in an hour, and dwell much in those regions whither thy devout partner is gone: thy better half is safely arrived there, and that world knows nothing but joy and love.

She is gone; the prophets and the apostles, and the best of departed souls, have marked out her way to heaven: bear witness ye apostles and holy prophets, ye best of departed souls bear witness, that I am seeking to follow her in the appointed moment. Let the wheels of nature and time roll on apace in their destined way. Let suns and moons arise and set apace, and light a lonesome traveller onward to his home.



home. Blessed *Jesus*, be thou my living leader! Virtue, and the track of *Serena's* feet be my daily and delightful path. The track leads upward to the regions of love and joy. How can I dare to wander from the path of virtue, lest I lose that beloved track? Remember, O my soul, her footsteps are found in no other road.

If my love to virtue should ever fail me, the steps of my *Serena* would mark out my way, and help to secure me from wandering. O may the kind influences of heaven descend from above, and establish and guard my pious resolutions! May the divine powers of religion be my continual strength, and the hope of eternal things my never-failing support, till I am dismissed from this prison of the flesh, and called to ascend to the spirits of the just made perfect; till I bid adieu to all that is not immortal, and go dwell with my God and my adored Saviour; there shall I find my lost *Serena* again, and share with her the unutterable joys of paradise.

Here *Lucius* threw himself on the couch, and lay silent in profound meditation.

When *Florino* had heard all this mournful rhapsody, he retired and stole away in secret, for he was now utterly ashamed of his first barbarous design: he felt a sort of strange sympathy of sorrow such as he  
never

never knew before, and with it some sparks  
 of virtue began to kindle in his bosom. As  
 he mused the fire burnt within, and at last  
 it made its way to his lips and vented itself.  
 “ Well, said he, I have learnt *two excellent*  
 “ *lessons* to day, and I hope I shall never  
 “ forget them. There must be some vast  
 “ and unknown pleasure in a virtuous love,  
 “ beyond all the madness of wild and tran-  
 “ sient amours; otherwise the loss of the  
 “ object, could never have wrought such  
 “ deep and unfeigned wo in a soul so  
 “ firm and manly as that of *Lucius*. I be-  
 “ gin now to believe what *Milton* sung,  
 “ though I always read the lines before as  
 “ mere poesy and fable.

*Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true  
 source*

*Of human offspring, sole propriety  
 In paradise, of all things common else:  
 By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from  
 men,*

*Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,  
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
 Relations dear, and all the charities  
 Of father, son and brother, first were  
 known:*

*Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets.  
 Here love his golden shafts employs, here  
 lights*

*His*

*His constant lamp, and waves his purple  
wings,*

*Reigns here and revels; not in the bought  
smile*

*Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unindear'd  
Casual amours, mixt dance, or wanton  
mask*

*Or midnight ball, &c.*

“ Blessed poet, that could so happily  
“ unite love and virtue, and draw so beau-  
“ tiful a scene of real felicity, which till  
“ this day I always thought was merely  
“ romantic and visionary! *Lucius* has taught  
“ me to understand these lines, for he has  
“ felt them; and methinks while I repeat  
“ them now, I feel a strange new sensation.  
“ I am convinced, the blind poet saw deep-  
“ er into nature and truth than I could  
“ have imagined. There is, there is such  
“ a thing as a union of virtuous souls,  
“ where happiness is only found. I find  
“ some glimmerings of sacred light ri-  
“ sing upon me, some unknown pantings  
“ within after such a partner and such a  
“ life.

“ Nor is the *other lesson* which I have  
“ learnt, at all inferior to this, but in truth  
“ it is of higher and more durable impor-  
“ tance. I confess since I was nineteen  
“ years old, I never thought virtue and re-  
“ ligion had been good for any thing, but

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“ to



“ to tie up children from mischief, and  
 “ frighten fools: But now I find by the  
 “ conduct of my friend *Lucius*, that as  
 “ the sweetest and sincerest joys of life are  
 “ derived from virtue, so the most distres-  
 “ sing sorrows may find a just relief in re-  
 “ ligious and sincere piety. Hear me, thou  
 “ Almighty Maker of my frame, pity and  
 “ assist a returning wanderer; and O may  
 “ thy hand stamp these lessons upon my  
 “ soul in everlasting characters!”

X. *Thou hast received gifts for men*, Psalm  
 lxxviii. 18.

*J*ESUS the mediator emptied himself  
 for our sakes, when he descended to  
 earth in order to die for us, and by his death  
 to subdue our enemies. Now the Father  
 has filled him again at his ascent into hea-  
 ven with every glory and every blessing,  
 with all authority and power to bestow  
 blessings, graces and glories on the sons of  
 men. *It pleased the Father, that in him all*  
*fulness should dwell. All power in heaven*  
*and earth was given into his hands*; Col. i.  
 19. Matt. xxviii. 18. And when he re-  
 ceived the power he distributed the bles-  
 sings. See Acts ii. 33. *Being by the right*  
*hand of God exalted, and having received of*  
*the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he*  
*hath*

*hath shed forth this, which ye now see and bear.* He hath shed abroad miracles and graces in abundance amongst the inhabitants of the lower world.

The triumphs of majesty must have some mercy in them, and ensigns of victory must be interwoven with signal displays of bounty and grace. *When he led captivity captive, he received gifts for men.* Our conquering Redeemer was not so elevated with the pomp of his triumphs over the angels his captive enemies, as to forget the captives that he released among the children of *Adam*. He received many donatives from his Father on high, to shower down among them upon his coronation-day, that illustrious day, when *He that in righteousness had made war and conquered, received on his own head many crowns.* Rev. xix. 11, 12.

He that could take so much pleasure on earth in his labours of love, takes more delight in heaven in the distributions of grace. This is the sweetest part of his triumph and the most visible among men, even the gifts of the Spirit that he sent down after his ascension. It was necessary that his grace should have some share of the glory of that day.

What was said of the great day of deliverance, when the *Jews* obtained victory over their designed murderers, may be ap-

plied with honour to the day when our Lord ascended to heaven, and celebrated his triumph over the spirits of darkness. *This was a good day for Israel, for all the saints; a day when Jesus rested from his enemies, and a month which was turned unto him from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a day of gladness.* This was a day of receiving portions for his brethren, and of sending gifts to the poor. Esther ix. 22.

*Jesus* our king is the prince of power and the prince of peace, he solemnized his victory with acts of mercy, and begun his reign with gifts of grace. He led *Satan* the arch-traitor bound at his chariot-wheels, and scattered donatives of pardon and life among the sons of *Adam* that had been seduced into the great rebellion.

It is another pleasant meditation on this text, *That God the Father had not given away all his gifts to men, even when he gave them his only begotten Son; for since that time he hath given his Son more gifts to be distributed among them.* Learn hence the unwearied love of God, the inexhausted stores of divine mercy. *John* iv. 10. Christ is called the gift of God. And 2 *Cor.* ix. 15. *The unspeakable gift.* He gave his own Son out of his bosom, and gave him up to death for us. His Son that was nearest his heart, his Son the delight of his soul and darling of his eternal enjoyment; and yet he



he is not weary of giving. O the immeasurable treasures of grace. O the unlimitable bounties of our God. Stand amazed, O heavens, and let the earth lie low in thankfulness and wonder, and every holy soul adore this surprising love!

Our meditations may take another step, and see here the divine condescension to human weakness: how a giving God stoops to the capacity of receiving creatures, and bestows the richest blessings on us in a sweet and alluring manner of conveyance. When he gave his Son to us, he first arrayed him in flesh and blood, that the glories of the deity might not affright us, nor his terror make us afraid. When he proceeds to confer on us further gifts, he puts them into the hands of his Son dwelling in our nature, that we might have easy access to him without fear, and receive gifts from him as a delightful medium, by whom a God of infinite purity hath a mind to confer favours on sinful man.

He has put all grace into those hands whence we ourselves would choose to fetch it. If a God of shining holiness and burning justice should appear like himself and call to us, guilty wretches, and hold forth his hand, here are gifts, here are pardons, here are salvations for you, we should be ready to say with *Job xii. 21. Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread*

*make me afraid.* But here we sinners come to a man, to one that has worn our flesh, and blood, that is our brother and of our own composition; we come with courage to him that looks like one of us to receive the gifts of a holy God, and the terrors of his holiness sink us not, nor doth the fire of his justice devour us. O my soul bow down and worship that God who stoops so low to thee, and has found such a mild and gentle method of conferring his heavenly favours on thee.

### XI. *The Gift of the Spirit.*

**W**HAT is dearer to *God the Father* than his only *Son*? And what diviner blessing has he to bestow upon men than his holy *Spirit*? Yet has he given his Son for us; and by the hands of his son he confers his blessed Spirit on us. *Jesus having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, shed it forth on men.* Acts ii. 33.

How the wondrous doctrine of the blessed trinity shines through the whole of our religion, and sheds a glory upon every part of it! Here is God the Father, a king of infinite riches and glory, has constituted his beloved Son the high-treasurer of heaven, and the holy Spirit is the divine and inestimable treasure. What amazing doc-  
trines

trines of sacred love are written in our Bibles! What mysteries of mercy, what miracles of glory are these! Our boldest desires and most raised hopes, durst never aim at such blessings: there is nothing in all nature that can lead us to a thought of such grace.

The Spirit was given by the Father to the Son for men; for *rebellious* and *sinful men*, to make favourites and saints of them: this was the noble *gift* the Son *received when he ascended on high*. Psal. lxxviii. 18. And he distributed it to grace his triumph.

Was it not a divine honour which *Jesus* our Lord displayed on that day, when the tongues of fire sat on his twelve apostles; when he sent his ambassadors to every nation to address them in their own language, to notify his accession to the throne of heaven, and to demand subjection to his government? When he conferred power upon his envoys to reverse the laws of nature and imitate creation? To give eyes to the blind, and to raise the dead? All this was done by the Spirit which he sent down upon them in the days of *Pentecost*.

But is this Spirit given to none but his apostles and the prime ministers in his kingdom? Was that rich treasure exhausted in the first ages of the gospel, and none



left for us? God forbid! Every one of his subjects have the same favour bestowed upon them, though not in the same degree: every humble and holy soul in our day, every true christian is possessor of the Spirit, for *he that has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. and wherever this Spirit is, it works miracles too; it changes the sinner to a saint, it opens his blind eyes; it new creates his nature; it raises the dead to a divine life, and teaches *Egypt* and *Assyria* and the *British* isles, to speak the language of *Canaan*. It is this gift of the Spirit which the Son sends down to us continually from the Father, that is the original and spring of all these strange blessings.

The Father has a heart of large bounty to the poor ruined race of *Adam*: the Son has a hand fit to be almoner to the King of glory; and the Spirit is the rich alms. This blessed donative has enriched ten thousand souls already, and there remains enough to enrich ten thousand worlds.

The Father, what a glorious giver! The Son, what a glorious medium of communication! and the Spirit, what a glorious gift! We blush and adore while we partake of such immense favours, and gratitude is even overwhelmed with wonder.

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O let our spirits rejoice in this blessed article of our religion! and may all the temptations that we meet with from men of reason, never, never baffle so sweet a faith!

## XII. *The Day of Grace.*

**I**F you ask the opinion of some divines concerning the day of grace, they will tell you, it signifies that particular season of a man's life, when the Spirit of God by convictions and good motions stirs him up to seek after salvation, and gives him sufficient grace to convert him; and all this while it was possible for him to be saved, and it was within the reach of his own power to make this grace effectual:—but this is determined to a certain, though unknown day, which if a man passes without being converted, then his salvation becomes impossible. Now, though I would not choose to borrow all my sentiments in the chief doctrines of the gospel, from the sermons of a bishop published on the *terms of salvation*, yet against this scheme I may venture to use an argument taken from that book.

Let us suppose, that it was declared in the gospel, that there was a certain number of sins, or a certain period of time, beyond  
which

which God would not pardon; and not any particular number, or time, was specified to the world: yet still most men (it is too justly to be feared) would first be led by *hope* to commit many sins, with a flattering persuasion that they should not come to that number, or arrive at that period; and then, when the habit was become strong, they would be fixed by *despair* in this opinion, that being probably got past that number of sins, and that period of grace, they had even as good continue in their sins, as their inclination powerfully directs them; they would go on in great wickedness and say, *there is no hope*. And thus we see, that even his supposition which seems to take most care of the cause of holiness, leaves it not only in a naked and unguarded, but in a very desperate condition.

Concerning a day of grace thus much may be said, and this is all that I can understand by it (*viz.*) That in the life of a man, there are particular seasons when he enjoys more of the outward means of grace, or advantages for the good of his soul than at other times; that is, more constant opportunities of hearing the word, a more useful and affecting ministry, better company, warmer admonitions, and plainer warnings by divine Providence; more leisure and conveniencies for reading, meditation and prayer: or, if all this continue all his



his life-time, yet there are seasons when the Spirit of God, by his common operations, does more powerfully convince of sin, and stir up the conscience to duty, and impress his word with more force upon the heart; but being opposed and resisted, he is grieved and departs, his workings grow daily fewer and feebler; or it may be he retires at once, and leaves the soul in a stupid frame and returns no more.

Yet we could not say heretofore, That the Spirit of God in his former operations, gave him a full and proximate sufficiency of inward converting grace before, since it proved so insufficient in the event and ineffectual: nor can we say now, that his day of grace is quite past and gone; because the Spirit of God, who is sovereign in mercy, may return again.

Yet it is a very good motive to urge upon delaying sinners, that it is a daring and dangerous piece of impiety and rebellion to quench the motions of the Holy Spirit; lest he depart grieved, and never return again; lest he never give them so fair an opportunity for conversion, never bring them so near again to the kingdom of heaven.

XIII. *God and Nature unsearchable.*

HOW poor and imperfect a creature is man! How unequal his knowledge of things! How large and almost immensely diffusive his acquaintance with some parts of nature, but how exceedingly limited and narrow in others! The man of learning, who has the highest temptations to pride, has also the most powerful motives to humility.

Man can measure the heavens, tell how many miles the planet *Venus* is distant from *Jupiter*, and how far the *earth* from the *sun*. He has found out with certainty the periods of their revolutions, and the hour of their eclipses; he can adjust the affairs of the planetary world to a moment, their vast variety of appearances with all their prodigious circuits. But this great artist MAN, is puzzled at a worm or a fly, a grain of sand or a drop of water: there is not the least atom in the whole creation, but has questions about it unsearchable by human nature; no, nor the least part of empty space, but sets all the wisest philosophers at variance when they attempt to tell what it is, or whether it be any thing or nothing.

This sort of talk, my neighbours will say, is a flourish of wit to teach us to undervalue  
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our reason, a mere rant of rhetoric, an hyperbole of reproach to our understanding : but while I leave it to astronomers to confirm what I have said concerning the vast extent of their acquaintance with the heavens, I shall make it appear, even to a demonstration, that our knowledge of the things on earth, is as mean as I have expressed, in the literal and proper sense.

There is not the least grain of sand on the shore, nor the least atom in the whole creation, but has questions about it unsearchable by human nature.

This atom may be divided into millions of millions of pieces, and after all this the least part of it will be infinitely divisible. The infinite divisibility of matter is so often proved and so universally granted by all modern philosophers, that I need not stand to prove it here : yet that my unlearned readers may see and believe, I will set down a plain vulgar demonstration or two of this matter.

I. It is certain, that if matter be not infinitely divisible, then there is, or may be, so small a part of matter which cannot be divided further : now take this supposed smallest part, this fancied atom, and put it between the points of a pair of compasses made of stiff and inflexible matter ; it is evident, that the legs of the compasses in  
less



less and less degrees will be divided asunder quite to the centre; and from the points to the centre, there is room for still less and less pieces of matter to be put between the legs. Therefore that very supposed atom may be conceived to be divided still further into less parts, and consequently it was not indivisible.

II. If there be any indivisible part of matter, the shape of it must be spherical, or a perfect globe, wherein every part of the surface is equally distant from the centre; for if you suppose it of any other shape, then some parts of it will be farther from its centre than other parts; and all these longer parts may be shortened or pared off till every part be equally short, or equally distant from the centre; that is, till it be reduced to a globe. Now from the centre of this little globe to the surface, the parts of it are but half so long as from any part of the surface to its opposite part; and therefore this globe may be still divided into two hemispheres or semicircles, which are not the smallest parts of matter that can be, because they are not of a spherical figure as in the beginning of the argument.

And then by a repetition of the same reasoning, those little semicircles or half-globes, by paring of the parts which are farthest from their centre, may be reduced  
to

to smaller globes again, and those smaller globes again divided in halves as before: there is no end of these divisions, and therefore matter is infinitely divisible.

To carry on this argument yet further, to the surprise of my unlearned readers; let us take notice, that all matter has three dimensions in it, namely, length, breadth and depth: now every part of matter, every grain of sand, is infinitely divisible as to each of these dimensions; that is, every part which results from an infinite division of the length of it, may be yet again infinitely divided according to its breadth; thus the division of this grain of sand, becomes infinitely infinite. And yet still it may be further infinitely divided, according to the depth or thickness of it: thus the divisibility of matter swells beyond all imagination, and is more than infinitely infinite, and that with resistless evidence and astonishment to the eye of reason.

Go now, vain man, and find fault with any part of the creation of God, and play the foolish critic on his works of providence; go and censure the justice of his conduct towards *Adam* or any of his children, or blame the wisdom of his institutions in the dispensations of his grace: monstrous arrogance, and proud impiety! Rather go first and learn what an atom is, or

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the meanest part of the dust of this vast creation which God has made. It has something of infinity in it; it confounds thee in perplexing darkness, and reaches far beyond all the little stretch of thy boasted powers of reasoning. Be dumb in silence, O vain creature, at the foot of this infinite and eternal being, nor pretend to measure his steps, to censure his motions, and direct his conduct, till thou art better able to give an account of the dust which he has put under the feet of the meanest of his slaves.

#### XIV. *The Diamond painted.*

HOW wide and unhappy a mistake it is, when Christians endeavour to adorn their *pure divine worship*, by the mixture of it with *ceremonies of human invention*. The symbolical ordinances of the gospel have a noble simplicity in them: their *materials* are *water, bread and wine*, three of the most necessary and valuable things in human life; and their *mystic sense* is plain, natural and easy. By *water* we are cleansed when we have been defiled; so by the *grace* of the *holy Spirit* we are purified from sin, which pollutes our souls in the sight of God. By *bread* we are fed when we are hungry, and nourished into strength  
for



for service: by *wine* we are refreshed and revived when thirsty and fainting; so from the *body of Christ* which was broken as an atoning sacrifice, and his blood which was poured out for us, we derive our spiritual life and strength. The application of these symbols is most simple, and natural also: we are commanded to *wash* with the water, to *eat* the bread, and to *drink* the wine: most proper representations of our participation of these benefits.

Thus much of figures and emblems did the all-wise God think proper to appoint and continue in his church, when he brake the yokes of *Jewish* bondage, and abolished a multitude of rites and ceremonies of his own ancient appointment. How plain, how natural, how glorious, how divine are these two *Christian* institutions, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, if surveyed and practised in their original simplicity! but they are debased by the addition of any fantastic ornaments.

What think ye of all the gaudy trappings and golden finery that is mingled with the *Christian* worship, by the imaginations of men in the church of *Rome*? Are they not like so many spots and blemishes cast upon a fair jewel by some foolish painter? Let the colours be ever so sprightly and glowing, and the lustre of the paint ever so rich, yet if you place them on a diamond

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they

they are spots and blemishes still. Is not this a just emblem to represent all the gay airs, and rich and glittering accoutrements wherewith the church of *Rome* hath surrounded her devotions and her public religion?

The reformers of our worship in the *Church of England* were much of this mind, for they boldly pass this censure on many of the *popish* ceremonies, that *they entered into the church by undiscreeet devotion and zeal without knowledge: they blinded the people, and obscured the glory of God, and are worthy to be cut away and clean rejected: that they did more confound and darken, than declare and set forth Christ's benefits unto us, and reduced us again to a ceremonial law, like that of Moses, and to the bondage of figures and shadows: this is their sentence and judgment concerning many of the Romish rites, in the preface to the book of Common Prayer.* Happy had it been for *Great-Britain*, if they had thought so concerning all of them, since they had all the same or a worse original, and they all tend to the same unhappy end! However, let others take their liberty of colouring all their jewels with what greens, and purples, and scarlets they please; but for my own part, I like a diamond best that has no paint upon it.

XV. *Bills of Exchange.* 1705.

**W**HEN a rich merchant, who dwells in a foreign land afar off, commits his treasure to the hands of a banker, it is to be drawn out in smaller sums by his servants or his friends here at home, as their necessities shall require; and he furnishes them with bills of exchange drawn upon his banker or treasurer, which are paid honourably to the person who offers the bill, according to the time when the words of the bill appoint the payment.

Is it not possible to draw a beautiful allegory hence, to represent the conduct of the blessed God in his promises of grace, without debasing so divine a subject?

God the Father, the spring and fountain of all grace, dwells in regions of light and holiness inaccessible, too far off for us to converse with him or receive supplies from him in an immediate way; but he has sent his Son to dwell in human nature, and constituted him treasurer of all his blessings, that we might derive perpetual supplies from his hand: he has intrusted him with all the riches of grace and glory; he has laid up infinite stores of love, wisdom, strength, pardon, peace, and consolation, in the hands of his Son for this very

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purpose,



purpose, to be drawn out thence as fast as the necessities of his saints require. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell. He has received gifts for men.* Col. i. 19. Psalm lxviii. 18.

Now all the promises in the Bible, are so many *bills of exchange* drawn by God the Father in heaven, upon his Son *Jesus Christ*, and payable to every pious bearer; that is, to every one that comes to the mercy-seat, and offers the promise for acceptance, and pleads it in a way of obedient faith and prayer. *Jesus*, the high-treasurer of heaven, knows every letter of his Father's hand-writing, and can never be imposed upon by a forged note; he will ever put due honour upon his Father's bills; he accepts them all, for *all the promises in him are yea, and in him amen.* In him they are all sure *to the glory of the Father*, 2 Cor. i. 20. It is for the Father's honour that his bills never fail of acceptance and payment.

If you apply to the blessed *Jesus*, and offer him a bill of the largest sum, a promise of the biggest blessings, he will never say, "I have not so much of my Father's treasure in my hand. For he has received all things." *John* iii. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand:* And may I not venture to say, this whole treasure is made over to the saints,

saints, *All things are yours*, 1 Cor. iii. 22. And they are parcelled out into bills of promise, and notes under the Father's hand. So the whole treasure of a nation sometimes consists in credit and in promissory notes, more than in present sums of gold and silver.

Some of these divine bills are payable at sight, and we receive the sum as soon as we offer the bill; (viz.) those that must supply our present wants; such as, *Call upon me IN THE DAY of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*. Psalm l. 15. and there have been many examples of such speedy payment. *Psalms* cviii. 3. *IN THE DAY when I cried thou answeredst me; and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul*.

Some are only payable in general at a distant time, and that is left to the discretion of *Christ* the treasurer. (viz.) *As thy day is, so thy strength shall be*. Deut. xxxiii. 25. and we need never fear trusting him long, for this bank in the hands of *Christ* can never fail; *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily*. Col. ii. 9. and Ephes. iii. 8. we are told of *the unsearchable riches of Christ*.

Sometimes *Christ* may put us off with a general kind answer, or give us a note under his hand, payable at demand, in several parcels instead of a full payment all at

once: thus he dealt with his dear friend and servant *Paul*, in 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. Doubtless *Paul* in his seeking the Lord thrice, for the removal of his thorn in the flesh, had pleaded several large promises of God, had offered those divine bills to *Christ* for acceptance and payment; but instead of this, our Lord gives him a note under his own hand which ran in this language, *My grace is sufficient for thee.* And if we had but the faith which that blessed apostle had, we might live upon this hope; this would be as good as present payment: for if he delay to give the full sum, it is only because he sees we have not need of it at present: he knows our necessities better than we ourselves; he will not trust us with too much at once in our hands; but he pays us those bills when he sees the fittest time, and we have often found it so, and confessed his faithfulness.

At other times he pays us, but not in the same *kind* of mercy which is mentioned in the *promise*, yet in something more useful and valuable. If the promise mentions a *temporal blessing*, he may give us a *spiritual* one; if it expresses *ease*, he may give *patience*: and thus his Father's bills are always honoured, and we have no reason to complain. So the banker may discharge a bill of a hundred pound, not with money, but with such goods and merchandize as  
may



may yield us two hundred, and we gladly confess the bill is well paid.

Some of these promises, these bills of heavenly treasure, are not made payable till the hour of our death, as, *Blessed are those servants whom, when the Lord comes, he shall find watching, &c.* Luke xii. 37. *He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* Matt. xxiv. 13. *Be thou faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Rev. ii. 10.

Others are not due till the day of the resurrection; as, *Them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* 1 Thess. iv. 14. *I will redeem them from death.* Hos. xiii. 14. Col. iii. 4. *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* Phil. iii. 20, 21. *He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* 1 Pet. v. 1, 4. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

Now when the great day shall come, in which our Lord Jesus Christ shall give up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, and render an account of all his stewardship, how fair will his books appear! how just a balance will stand at the foot of all his accounts! Then shall he shew in what manner he has fulfilled the promises to the saints, and present to the Father all the bills that

he has received and discharged; while all the saints shall with one voice attest it, to the honour of the High-treasurer of heaven, that he has not failed in payment even to the smallest farthing.

#### XVI. *The Saints unknown in this World.*

OUT of the millions of mankind that spread over the earth in every age, the great God has been pleased to take some into his own family, has given them a heavenly and divine nature, and made them his sons and his daughters. But he has set no outward mark of glory upon them; there is nothing in their figure or in their countenance, to distinguish them from the rabble of mankind. And it is fit that they should be in some measure unknown among their fellow mortals: their character and dignity is too sacred and sublime to be made public here on earth, where the circumstances that attend them are generally so mean and despicable. Divine wisdom has appointed the other world for the place of their full discovery; there they shall appear like themselves, in state, equipage and array, becoming the children of God and heirs of heaven.

Their blessed Lord himself, who is God's first-born Son, was a mere stranger and unknown

unknown amongst men ; he laid aside the rays of divinity and *the form of a God*, when he came down to dwell with men, and he *took upon him the form of a servant*. He wore no divine majesty on his face, no sparks of godhead beaming from his eyes, no glaring evidence of his high dignity in all his outward appearance. *Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.* But he shall be known and adored when he comes *in the glory of his Father*, with legions of angels ; and *we know that when he shall appear, we shall belike him*. The life of the saints *is bidden with Christ in God : but when Christ, who is their life shall appear, they also shall appear with him in glory.* 1 John iii. 1, 2. Col. iii. 3, 4. In that day they shall stand forth before the whole creation in fair evidence, they shall shine in distinguished light, and appear vested in their own undoubted honours. But here it seems proper there should be something of a cloud upon them, both upon the account of the men of this world, and upon their own account too, as well as in conformity to *Christ Jesus* their Lord.

First, *Upon their own account*, because the present state of a christian is a state of trial. We are not to *walk by sight* as the saints above and angels do ; they know they are possessed of life and blessedness, for they see *God* himself near them, *Christ* in the



the midst of them, and *glory* all around them. Our work is to *live by faith*, and therefore God has not made either his love to us, or his grace in us so obvious and apparent to ourselves, as that every christian, even the weak and the unwatchful, should be fully assured of his salvation. He has not appointed the principle of life within us, to sparkle in so divine a manner, as to be always self-evident to the best of christians, much less to the luke-warm and the backslider. It is fit that it should not be too sensibly manifest, because it is so sensibly imperfect, that we might *examine ourselves whether we are in the faith, and prove ourselves, whether Christ, as a principle of life, dwell in us, or no.* 2 Cor. xiii. 5. While so many snares and sins and dangers attend us, and mingle with our spiritual life, there will be something of darkness ready to rise and obscure it, that so we may maintain a holy jealousy and solicitude about our own state, that we may search with diligence to find whether we have a divine life or no, and be called and urged often to look inwards.

This degree of remaining darkness, and the doubtful state of a slothful christian, is sometimes of great use to spur him onward in his race of holiness, and quicken him to aspire after the highest measures of the spiritual life; that when its acts are more vi-

gorous,

gorous, it may shine with the brightest evidence, and give the soul of the believer full satisfaction and joy. It serves also to awaken the drowsy christian to keep a holy watch over his heart and practice, lest sin and temptation make a foul inroad upon his divine life, spread still a thicker cloud over his best hopes, and break the peace of his conscience. Though the principle of grace be not always self-evident, yet we are required *to give diligence, to make and to keep it sure.* 2 Pet. i. 10.

And as it was proper that every little seed of grace, should not shine with self-sufficient and constant evidence, *on the account of the christian himself*, so *secondly*, it was fit that their state and dignity should not be *too obvious to the men of the world*, that they might *neither adore nor destroy the saints*. A principle of *superstition* might tempt *some* weaker souls, to pay extravagant honours to the christian, if he carried heaven in his face, and it were visible in his countenance that he was a Son of God. *On the other hand*, the *malicious and perverse* part of mankind might imitate the rage of *Satan*, and attempt the sooner to destroy the saint.

This was the case of the blessed *Paul*. When he had wrought a miracle at *Lystra*, and appeared with something divine about him, when he had healed the cripple by a  
mere

mere word of command, the people cried out with exalted voices, *The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.* Immediately they made a *Mercury* of St. Paul, they turned *Barnabas* into *Jupiter*, and the priest brought oxen and garlands to the gates to have done sacrifice to them: this was the humour of the *superstitious Gentiles*. But in several of the *Jews*, their malice and envy wrought a very different effect; for they persuaded the people into fury, so that they stoned the blessed apostle, and drew him out of the city for dead. Acts xiv.

Thus it fared with our Lord *Jesus Christ* himself in the days of his flesh. For the most part he lived unknown among men, *he did not cry nor make his voice to be heard in the streets*: but when he discovered himself to them on any special occasion, the people ran into different extremes. When the characters of the *Messiah* appeared with evidence upon him, they would have raised him to a throne, and made an earthly king of him. John vi. 15. At another time, when his holy conduct did not suit their humour, they were filled with wrath, and led him to the brow of a hill to cast him down headlong. Luke iv. 29. Therefore our blessed Lord did not walk through the streets and tell the world he was the *Messiah*; but by degrees he let the characters of his mission appear upon him, and discovered himself



self in wisdom, as his disciples and the world could bear it, and as the Father had appointed.

Let us imitate our blessed Lord, and copy after so divine a pattern; let our works bear a bright and growing witness to our inward and real christianity. This is such a gentle sort of evidence, that though it may work conviction in the hearts of spectators, yet it does not strike the sense with so glaring a light as to dazzle the weaker sort who behold it into superstitious folly; nor does it give such provocation to the envy of the malicious, as if the saints had borne the sign of their high dignity in some more surprising manner in their figure or countenance.

I might add also, There is something in this sort of evidence of their saintship, that carries more true honour in it, than if some heavenly name had been written in their forehead, or their skin had shone like the face of *Moses* when he came down from the mount. It is a more sublime glory for a prince to be found amongst the vulgar in undistinguished raiment, and by his superior conduct and shining virtues to force the world to confess that *He is the son of a king*, than to walk through the rabble with ensigns of royalty, and demand honour from them by the mere blaze of his ornaments.

XVII. *Praise*

XVII. *Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion.*

*Psalms lxxv. 1.*

AND does praise wait for God in the congregation of his saints? Surely it doth not use to be so. Mercy uses to be beforehand with us, and the *Lord waiteth to be gracious*. Mercy is wont to be ready in the hands of God, before praise is ready on the tongues of men; and we are sure he waited on us to shew his grace, long before we had any songs ready for him, or any thought of praising him.

Yet sometimes it is so in this lower world. Holy souls may be waiting at the throne of grace, with their praises ready to ascend as soon as mercy appears: mercy may be silent for a season, and then praise for a season is silent too. This is the original language of the psalm, and this the state of things, when the psalmist wrote; *Praise is silent for thee, in Zion*. When the church of God under trouble has been long seeking any particular blessing or deliverance, and God's appointed hour of salvation is not yet come, then the songs of the church are silent: Yet she stands watching and waiting

ing for the desired moment, that she may meet the salvation with praise.

But why should God suffer praise to be silent at all in *Zion*? Is not the church the habitation of his praises? Yes, but it is the house of prayer too: prayer and patience must have their proper exercise. If praise were never silent on earth, where would there be any room for prayer to speak? When would there be any season for the grace of patience to shew itself? God loves prayer as well as praise: his sovereignty is honoured by humble waiting, as well as his goodness by holy gratitude and joy. If praise be silent, then let prayer be more fervent. The absent Saviour loves to hear the voice of his beloved; the lips of the church must never be quite silent, though they are not always employed in hallelujahs.

Praise is the sweetest part of divine worship; it is a short heaven here on earth. God lets our praises be silent sometimes, to teach us that this is not a state of complete blessedness. After the great day of decision, praise shall be continual and unceasing, when there shall be no more fighting for the saints, no more death, no more pain. Then churches shall want ordinances no more, nor saints abstain from the bread of life. *Jesus* their everlasting pastor shall feed them, in pastures ever green, and from the tree of life, and lead them to  
the



the fountains of joy and the streams where eternal pleasures run. O may our souls wait with joyful hope for that day; and our praises shall not be silent.

Yet it is not with the church as it is with the world, when praise is silent in both. It is ever silent among the wicked, because they are forgetful of God their maker; it is only silent among the saints for a season, when their God seems to frown and hide himself, and (as it were) to forget his people.

*Besides,* Let us consider that all praise is not silent there. Daily incense arises before God in the temple, though particular thank-offerings wait till particular mercies are received. Praise for all the greatest mercies (*viz.*) for redeeming grace, for electing love, for the sanctifying spirit is never silent in Zion. Psalm lxxxiv. 4. *Blessed are they that dwell in thine house, they will be still praising thee.* But praise for some special favours may be silent for a season, as well as that large revenue of praise that shall grow due at the accomplishment of all the promises and the consummation of blessedness.

*Again,* the praises of God are silent in the world without any design of breaking forth; but the silence of the church longs to be lost in joyful songs of thanksgiving. It is like an engine charged with praise,  
that

that wants only the warm touch of mercy to make it shine with the glories of heavenly worship, and sound aloud the name of the God of *Zion*.

Sometimes God is as well pleased that praise should wait with humble silence, as that it should speak. It shews a well disposed frame and temper of soul, that longs to honour God. The hearts of his saints are instruments of music to the Lord; he has formed their souls for his glory, and tuned their heart strings to his own praise. Now he loves to see them kept still in tune, though he does not always play his own praises upon them; he neither wants our services nor our songs, for his own perfections are an everlasting harmony to himself, without the slender notes that we can sound.

We may make this sweet remark at last, that *Zion* on earth, shall be joined to *Jerusalem* above; the family below shall be joined to the upper house, for they have learnt the work of heaven, their hearts are tuned to praise; they want only such harps as angels have, to bring glory down and make a heaven on this earth. In the 1 *Chron.* xi. 4. we are told that *David* took *Zion* from the *Jebusites*, and built it round about, and added it to *Jerusalem*. So shall *Jesus* the true *David*, the king of saints, take this earthly *Zion* from the powers of this

wicked world, and shall build and adorn it around with glory and strength, with perfect beauty and complete grace, and add it to the *Jerusalem* which is above. Look upwards O souls who are full of praises, and are even impatient to speak the glories of your God, look to *Jerusalem* above, where praise is constant and never-ceasing, and rejoice to think that you shall be made inhabitants of that city, and united to the glorious church. It is your chief pleasure here to be praising your God, and it is the chief pleasure of your fellow-saints on high : where happiness is perfect, praise is perfect too and never silent.

It is the chief delight of happy souls there to run over the glories of their God, and tell one another joyfully, and humbly tell their God, what a wise, what a holy, what an almighty and all-gracious God he is. Every breath of praise is a new gale of pleasure there ; it is sweet breathing in air perfumed with praises, and this climate is most agreeable to your new nature and your constitution, you that are members and parts of *Zion* ; and you shall be translated thither to your kindred-souls. In heaven, the river of pleasure springs from God's right hand, because *Jesus* the saviour sits there. It is a river that makes glad the city of God, and every stream, as it flows  
along



along the golden streets, murmurs sweet praises to the fountain.

But heaven and the state of glory are not yet complete: the church waits above for many promises that are not yet fulfilled, and future blessings that are yet unknown. The work of grace is not finished till the great resurrection day; and heaven itself, in all the blissful regions of it, waits for such praises as the ears of men or angels have never yet heard.

While the whole church of God on earth is in a state of imperfection and trial, a state of sins and sorrows, praise waits in all the sanctuaries below, and in *Zion* above too. The souls in glory wait for complete salvation, and the redemption of their bodies from the grave. On the harps of angels praise sits waiting, and it waits also on the tongue of *Jesus* the intercessor. His prayers shall one day change all at once into praises, and lift the praises of angels and of embodied saints, to higher notes than ever yet they knew. O the voices, and the songs, the joys, the raptures of that moment, of that day, of that eternity, when such a multitude of praises shall burst out at once, which have been waiting long in that *Zion*, and shall become an everlasting praise! When *Jesus* the Son of God, the Mediator, shall lead the worship; and the praises that have been growing these seventeen hun-

dred years on his tongue shall break forth and spread themselves abroad, and all the creation shall hear, and all echo to this song, *Glory to God in the highest*. This is what we wait and hope for, and long to bear a part in those pleasures and those praises.

XVIII. Job xxiii. 3. *O that I knew where I might find him!*

**A**MONG all the various kinds and orders of God's intellectual creation, there is not one that uses this language besides a mourning saint in this lower world. As for all other spirits, whether dwelling in flesh or not, their wishes are expressed in a very different manner; nor do they seek and long to find out an absent God.

If we ascend up to heaven, and enquire there what are the wishes of those blessed spirits, we shall find that their enjoyments are so glorious, and their satisfactions rise so high in the immediate presence of God amongst them, that they have nothing of this nature left to wish for: they know that their God is with them, and all their wish is, what they are assured to enjoy, That this God will be with them for ever.

If we descend to the regions of hell, where God reigns in vengeance, we shall hear

hear those unhappy spirits groaning out many a faithful wish, “ O that I knew  
“ where I might avoid him, that I might  
“ get out of his sight, out of his notice  
“ and reach for ever ! I feel his dreadful  
“ presence, and O that it were possible for  
“ me to be utterly absent from him, and to  
“ find a place where God is not !”

If we take the wings of the morning, and fly to the utmost parts of the eastern or the western world, we shall find the language of those ignorant heathens, “ O that  
“ I knew where I might find food, and  
“ plenty, and all sensual delights !” but they send not a wish after the great God, though he has been so many ages absent from them and their fathers. He is unknown to them, and they have no desires working in them after an unknown God.

If we tarry at home and survey the bulk of mankind around us, the voice of their wishes sounds much the same as that of the heathen world, “ O that I knew where I  
“ might find trade and merchandise, riches  
“ and honours, corn, wine and oil, the  
“ necessaries or the superfluous luxuries  
“ of life !” But God is not in all their thoughts. If they frequent the temples, and attend the seasons of worship, they are well enough satisfied with outward forms without the sight of God in them. There is no natural man that with a sincere



longing of soul cries out, “ O that I knew  
“ where to find him !”

As for the children of God that live in the light of their father’s countenance, they walk with him daily and hourly, they behold him near them by the eye of faith; and they feel the sweet influences of his gracious presence; their highest ambition and their dearest wishes are, “ Oh that he  
“ might abide for ever with me, and keep  
“ me for ever near to himself !”

The words of this scripture therefore can only be the language of a saint on earth in distress and darkness; when God who was wont to visit him with divine communications, and to meet him in his addresses to the throne of grace, has withdrawn himself for a season, and left the soul to grapple with many difficulties alone.

This was the case of that holy man, whose sorrows and complaints have furnished out almost a whole book of scripture, and supplied the saints in all succeeding ages with the forms and speeches of pious mourning. It is the voice of a sacred impatience that *Job* here utters, “ O that I  
“ knew where I might find him !” and by a plain paraphrase we may learn both the meaning and the reason of such language, and be taught by his example to lament after an absent God.

Let

Let us suppose the saint therefore pouring out his soul in such sort of expressions as these, in which I shall not entirely confine myself to the darkness of the patriarchal dispensation under which *Job* lived, but indulge the language of the New Testament, and personate a mourning Christian.

“ Time was when I had a God near me, and upon every new distress and difficulty I made him my present refuge ; I was wont to call upon him in an hour of darkness, and he shone upon my path with divine light. He has often taught me to read my duty in his providences, or in his word, or by some secret hints of his own spirit, even while I have been kneeling at the throne of grace : but now I find not my usual signs and tokens, my guide and my counsellor is withdrawn. “ O that I knew “ where I might find him ! ”

“ He was once my kind assistant in every duty, and my support under every burden : I have found the grace of my Lord sufficient for me in my sharpest conflicts, his strength has appeared in my weakness. When my spiritual enemies have beset me round, he has scattered them before me, or subdued them under me ; and being held up by his everlasting arms, I have stood my ground, and borne up my head under the weight of heavy sorrows : but now I am attacked on all sides, my soul wrestles hard

with sins and temptations, and I find no assistance, no victory : I sink under my present sorrows ; for my God, my strength, and my comforter is absent, and afar off.

“ O that I knew where I might find  
“ him ! ”

“ My God was wont to deal with me as a compassionate friend ; when Satan accused, he has justified. He has shown me the all-sufficient sacrifice of his Son, and that spotless righteousness of his which has answered all the demands of his own holy law, and cancelled all the charges of guilt that the devil, or my own conscience, could bring against me. He has taught me by faith to put my soul under the sprinklings of this sacred blood, and to wrap around me the robe of this divine righteousness ; he himself has arrayed me in garments of salvation : but now the army of my sins rises up before me and overwhelms my spirit with many terrors ; Satan the accuser urges on the charge, and my Saviour and his righteousness are as it were hidden from me. “ O that I knew where I might find  
“ him ! ”

“ Many a censure have I borne from men, and had my reputation assaulted and my good name blackened with many a scandal. But when man reproached me, God has undertook my cause, and made my righteousness shine as the light, and my  
inno-



innocence as the noon-day ; I could then pour out my soul before him, tell him all my sorrows in flowing language, and feel sweet relief : but now, alas, troubles and reproaches are multiplied upon me, and he does not seem to take my part ; my spirit is bound and shut up, and I am cut off from that free converse, that humble holy intimacy which I once enjoyed with my God ; I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard ; I cry aloud, but there is no judgment. Will he not help me to pray ? Will he not hear my groans and requests ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? yet I would seek his face still, and “ O that I  
“ knew where I might find him !”

“ Often have I seen him in his own ordinances in the place of public worship ; I have seen his power and his glory in the sanctuary : I have found him in secret corners, and my meditation of him has been exceedingly sweet. In dark retirements he has smiled on my soul, and has often given me reviving light. I have found him in his works, and I have had a fairer sight of him in his word ; I can name the places, the pleasant lines in my Bible, and say, “ I have seen the face of my  
“ God here :” but now the Bible itself is like a sealed book, or like a strange language which I cannot understand ; I hear not the voice of my God speaking to  
me

me there; I go forward to his promises, and read what he will do for his people, but I perceive him not; backward to his past providences, or to my own experiences, and review what he has done, but there is a darkness too: I turn to my left-hand amongst his works of nature, but I do not see him; I seek him on my right-hand amongst his works of grace, but still he hides himself that I cannot behold him, ver. 8, 9. “ I wander in the  
 “ night and enquire after him, I watch  
 “ for him more than they that watch for  
 “ the morning, I say more than they that  
 “ watch for the morning; O that I knew  
 “ where I might find him!”

“ And it is no wonder that I am so impatient under the painful sense of his present distance from me, and so importunate for his return: for I have known the dreadful case of utter distance from him in a state of nature and sin, and I have tasted something of the pleasure of being brought nigh by grace; and now I dread every thing that looks like the old distance, that estrangement; I would fain renew those divine pleasures of a returning and a reconciled God: “ O that I knew where I  
 “ might find him!”

“ Besides, I bethink myself and say,  
 “ What shall I do without a God!” for I find all creatures utterly insufficient to relieve  
 and

and help me ; and I have known something of God's all-sufficiency ; he has been my helper in six troubles and in seven ; he is my only hope : when creatures stand aloof from me, and each of them say, " There is no help in me," whither should I go then but to my God ? " O that I knew where I might find him ! "

" I have been so much used to live upon him, and found his divine aids and influences so necessary to my life and my peace, that I sink and die at his absence. I feel within myself a sort of heavenly instinct that I want his presence, and cannot live without him. I know he stands in no need of me, for he gives to all his creatures life and breath, and being ; but I need his counsels and his comforts, his strength and his love : my soul is touched with such a divine influence, that it cannot rest while God withdraws, as the needle trembles and hunts after the hidden loadstone. If my God retire and hide himself, he will forgive a creature that loves him so well as to follow hard after him without ceasing, and is impatient and restless till he search him out ; " O that I knew where " I might find him. "

" Though God is pleased to depart from me for a season, yet I cannot let go all my hope ; he hides himself from my soul, yet I dare not think him an enemy, but  
only



only a concealed friend : if I could get near him even to his seat, I know I should find it a mercy-seat, though perhaps judgment may sit there too. It is a throne of grace, says a Christian, because *Jesus* is there with the blood of atonement ; and having such an high-priest over the house of God, and such a new and living way of access by the blood of Christ, I will seek after him and address myself to him ; I will confess mine iniquities before him ; and be sorry for my sins, which may have beclouded or eclipsed my heavenly sun, and hid his face from me ; I fear I have grieved his blessed Spirit, and provoked him to withdraw his kind influences of light, strength and comfort ; nor will I cease grieving for his absence till he return again.

“ Come, O eternal Spirit, come and visit my poor dark and disconsolate soul ; come and awaken all my powers to follow hard after my Father and my God. Come, invigorate my faith, and lead me to the Mediator, the blessed *Jesus* ; come, open to me the promises, and let me into the covenant of his unchangeable love, ratified and sealed with blood. If ever I find my God again, it is there, I know, I must find him : Christ is the only way to the Father. It is by the interest of his Son I shall get near to him, even to his seat ;  
then

then will I pour out all my woes and my wants in his sight, I will order my cause before him and fill my mouth with arguments. Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he will put strength in me, and assist and suffer me to prevail with him.

“Then, when I have found him whom my soul loveth, I will hold him fast and not let him go: I will charge all the powers and passions of my nature not to yield to one sinful practice, nor provoke him to depart; for he is my everlasting and my almighty friend.

“Then, though I should have a thousand enemies set themselves against me, I would not be afraid; yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for I have found my God, and my God is with me.”

### XIX. *The Figure of a Cherub.*

**A** *Cherub* is a name used in scripture to denote some angelic power or powers under the figure of some strange animal: the plural number in the *Hebrew* is *cherubim*, which signifies *cherubs*, and I know not how our translators of the Bible came so often to speak of *cherubims*, adding an *s* to the *Hebrew* plural number instead of the *English* plural, (*viz.*) *cherubs*. Perhaps

haps some learned writers using the word *cherubini* in Latin, instead of *cherubi*, might lead them into this grammatical irregularity.

The *Jews* themselves greatly differ about the form or figure of a *cherub*. *Josephus*, in his *Antiq.* b. III. chap. 6. tells us, that *cherubs* are flying animals, like to none that were ever seen by men, and whose form no man knoweth. *Abenezra*, a learned *Jew*, supposes it to be a general name, extending itself to all forms or figures; though in the writings of *Moses* he supposes it to come nearer the figure of a young man or boy.

Some have imagined, that the mere face of a boy with wings, is sufficient to describe a *cherub*; and accordingly such figures are wrought into the ornaments of buildings and curtains, &c. but I know no just ground for this imagination, except it be that those on the ark were beaten out of the same mass of gold which made the mercy-seat: and it must be confessed, this sort of figure is more easy to be thus formed than any tall shape with a body and feet. *Exod.* xxv. 19. and xxxvii. 7.

It is generally represented in scripture like some strange living creature with one or more faces, having both wings and feet: when it has four faces, they are borrowed from a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle:



the wings are described as very large, and the feet, when they are particularly described, are like those of an ox or a calf: but whether the whole figure be more like that of an ox or of a man, the learned are not agreed. This is certain, that the several scriptures wherein *cherubs* are mentioned, can hardly be reconciled without supposing them represented in different forms, sometimes nearer to one of these forms, and sometimes to the other. If therefore after all our searches we cannot come to a full determination, we must be content to acknowledge our ignorance, though perhaps by diligent enquiry we may come pretty near to the truth.

If we consult the derivation of the word, it seems to come from *כרוב* *charab*, which in the *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* languages signifies *to plow*, which is the known work of oxen. This favours the sentiment of those who describe it as a flying ox.

Others tell us, that *כרוב* *cherub*, in *Arabic*, is a *ship that carries merchandise*, and that a *cherub* is a *chariot of God*, appointed to carry the *shechinah*, or bright glory, which is the symbol of God's presence; and therefore God is said to ride upon a *cherub*. *Psalms* xviii. 11. *יִרְכַּב עַל כְּרוּב* *jirchab al cherub*, he rode on a cherub, and *Psalms* civ. 3. it is said *he maketh the clouds his chariot*,

*riot*, רכוב *reckub* ; so that by the transposition of a letter, which is frequent with the *Hebrews*, it seems to signify a *chariot* : and in 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 18. the *cherubs* upon the ark are called *the chariot of the cherubim*, and the whole figure in *Ezekiel's* vision had wheels all about it as a chariot ; and yet it is sometimes called the *cherub* in the singular, and sometimes *cherubim* or *cherubs*.

All this is true ; but in a chariot there are generally some animals represented as moving, drawing or carrying it. And though in *Ezekiel's* vision it is a living or animated chariot, with living wheels which had the spirit of the animals in them, *Ezek.* i. 20. yet there are winged animals to move it, or to move with it. The whole is composed of four living creatures which had faces and wings, and feet and hands, joined together in a living machine with wheels, and the God of glory rode upon it. But let us proceed and consider several scriptures more particularly and in order.

The first place where we find the name mentioned is *Gen.* iii. ult. *God placed cherubs and a flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life.* This does not seem to mean a chariot or chariots, but living creatures : if they were in the shape of men, then a flaming sword is waving in their hands. If in the form of flying oxen, then  
with

with flames about them flashing out like a sword from their eyes, nostrils or mouth. Perhaps the brazen-footed bulls breathing out flames which guarded the golden fleece in *Colchos*, may be derived hence by the fabulous *Greeks*.

————— *Adamanteis volcanum naribus efflant  
æripides tauri.* Ovid.

Or, as the *Greeks* were wont to compound and divide stories at pleasure, these bulls might keep the gardens of the *Hesperides* where the golden apples grew, that is, by the fabling interpretation, the fruit of the tree of life; though generally I confess a dragon is made the guardian of them, which wild fable might arise from the *serpent* being there, *Gen.* iii. 1. for stories taken from the Bible are variously mangled and confounded by the *heathens*.

Some have supposed indeed, these cherubs and flaming sword are only a *flaming division* visible, made of burning pitch and such materials, and that this was kindled in the borders of that ground to guard it from men, and that it is attributed to angels after the *Jewish* manner: others think it the divine *Shechinah* itself guarding the passage to the tree of life, and *cherubs* are added by *Moses* to represent God's being attended with invisible angels. But neither of these



two last suppositions carry probability with them, because the word *cherub* is never used in narratives for mere invisible powers, nor for visible inanimate beings; but it always signifies some visible figure of one animated being or more joined together, though it is designed to denote these invisible angelic powers.

The next scripture where it is mentioned is *Exod.* xxv. 18. Among the orders given to *Moses* for making the ark and the mercy-seat, with the two cherubs to cover it with their wings, one at one end and the other at the other end. Ver. 19, 20. \* And whatsoever figure belonged to these *cherubs*, which is so much unknown to us, it was certainly a common idea and well known figure to the *Jews* in that day; for

\* The cherubs in *Solomon's* temple stand in another situation, 1 *Kings* vi. 23. for they are placed side by side, so that their four wings reached the whole length of the most holy place. But these seem to be made as some further attendants on the *Shechinah* or divine glory, besides the two cherubs which were on the mercy-seat; for it was the very same ark which *Moses* made that was introduced into *Solomon's* temple, 1 *Kings* viii. 6. and the cherubs on it were beaten out of the same mass of gold which made the mercy-seat or covering of the ark, *Exod.* xxxvii. 7, 8. so that it is most likely those ancient cherubs continued there still, and *Solomon's* were additional attendants in the most holy place, of a much larger size and over-shadowing those on the mercy-seat.

*Moses*

Moses doth not concern himself to give any particular description of them as he does almost of every thing else, and yet the *Jewish* artificers made them right.

Some think that these two cherubs on the ark were in the shape of flying oxen, or something near to that figure, and that for these reasons.

1. Because both their faces looked toward one another, and yet both faces downward toward the mercy-seat, *Exod.* xxv. 20. and xxxvii. 9. which posture and description is well suited to an ox, but not so happily adapted to the figure and aspect of the face of a man.

2. Because the same face which is called *the face of an ox*, *Ezek.* i. 10. is called the *face of a cherub*, *Ezek.* x. 14. and thus a cherub's face is actually and expressly distinguished from that of a man, and determined to be the face of an ox.

3. Because God is said to *ride upon a cherub*, *Psal.* xviii. 10. Though this be a metaphorical expression to describe the grandeur and majesty of God, yet the metaphor must be derived from some correspondent sensible figure: now the figure of a *winged ox*, or at least of a chariot carried or drawn by winged oxen, is a much fitter vehicle to ride upon in glory and grandeur, in majesty and terror, than the figure of a man.

4. *Aaron's calf* is reasonably supposed to be a *cherub*; for neither he nor his abettors can well be imagined so foolish as to make the figure of a mere calf, as some would have it, or of the *Egyptian* god *Apis*, who was worshipped under the form of an ox, when it was made as an idol for the *Israelites* to adore; since the *Egyptian* gods as well as *men* partook of the vengeance of the God of *Israel* for the oppression of his people. *Numb.* xxxiii. 4.

It is therefore much more credible that *Aaron's calf* was designed as a visible symbol of the presence of the God of *Israel*, even that very God who released them from their *Egyptian* masters. The proclamation made before this image was this, *These are thy Gods, O Israel, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt.* *Exod.* xxxii. 4. It would be contrary to all reason to represent the *Egyptian* gods as bringing *Israel* from *Egypt*, for then they would have been kinder to the *Israelites* who were strangers, than they were to their own worshippers the *Egyptians*. Besides, it was a *feast to Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*, which they celebrated, *Exod.* xxxii. 5. And therefore it is more likely that *Aaron's calf* was some symbol of the presence of the God of *Israel*; and that it might be the figure of a *cherub*, on or over which they would suppose the divine *Shekinah* or glory of God to sit; for



so it appeared on the ark when it was made, and so it appeared in *Ezekiel's* visions. *Ezek.* i. 26—28. and x. 18, 19. So *David* describes it *Psal.* xviii. 10. when the God of *Israel* rode on a cherub.

Shall it be said, that *Aaron* had not yet received the order for making the *cherubs* on the ark, and therefore could not know the figures? But I answer, that *cherubs* were well known to the *Jews* of that age, as I hinted before, since *Moses* gives no description of them to instruct the artificers. They were known of old probably to the patriarchs and to mankind, as emblems of divine majesty and terror, guarding the way to the tree of life. *Gen.* iii. 24. And some have supposed, that *Aaron* with his sons and the seventy elders saw God in the mount, *Exod.* xxiv. 10. riding on a cherub as in *Ezek.* i. since the other part of that description of God in *Exodus* is much like that in *Ezekiel* i. 26. and x. 1. But I proceed to another argument to prove cherubs to be flying oxen.

5. Another reason why a cherub is supposed to be a winged ox is this, *Jeroboam* the king of *Israel* is most reasonably supposed to imitate the worship of *Jerusalem*, when he set up golden calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and thus to represent God dwelling between the cherubs on the mercy-seat; that the other tribes of *Israel* might have

the same worship as the *Jews* at *Jerusalem*, and that the ten tribes might not be inclined to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship, and be in danger of returning to their king *Rehoboam* again : for it is hardly to be supposed that *Jeroboam* should so soon persuade all the ten tribes into such gross idolatry as to worship mere *calves*, though the scripture calls them so, as usually it does all idols by some word of contempt.

This idolatry, or worshipping a mere calf, would have been too plain and too gross to be imposed upon the people at first, and that so soon after their separation from *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, this being so expressly contrary to the second command, *Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven, or earth, or water, &c.* Now if we suppose a cherub to be the figure of a winged ox, or any other winged figure with the face and feet of an ox superadded, it will not be the likeness or image of any thing in heaven, earth or water, and consequently *Jeroboam* might persuade the people that this was not plainly forbidden; nay, more, that it was ordered by *Moses* in the tabernacle, and such figures were in the temple.

Let it be further added, that when the worship of *Baal* was introduced into *Israel* by *Ahab*, it seems to be a different idol  
from

from the calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and yet it was something akin to it. The image of *Baal* was the image of a *heifer*, as we are told in the first chapter of *Tobit*, ver. 5. and it is evident that *Baal* is sometimes used in the masculine and sometimes in the feminine. See 1 *Kings* xvi. 31. in the Septuagint, 1 *Kings* xix. 18. and the citation of that text in *Rom.* xi. 4. But if *Baal* was a common heifer, it is probable these calves of *Jeroboam* were something different; for it is plain from many scriptures that *Baal* was an idol of the *Canaanites*, which *Abab* worshipped, when both king and people had grown bold in their idolatry: but the calves were designed by *Jeroboam* for symbols of the presence of *Jehovah* the God of *Israel*, and therefore probably they were not common calves, but cherubs, or winged oxen, or a figure near akin to those in the temple of *Jerusalem*.

6. It is further added as another reason, that though the tribe of *Judah* imitated *Israel* in all their other shapes of idolatry, yet they never imitated *Jeroboam's* calves: now what reason can be given for this, unless it be because the *Jews* are supposed to have had the very originals at *Jerusalem*; that is, the cherubs upon the mercy-seat in the form of flying calves and oxen.

These arguments seem to carry great weight with them; yet others have supposed



the *cherub* to be a winged man, because it is described often with one face at least as a man, and also with hands in scripture. Some of the *Jews* say, it is a young man in beauty and vigour, because it has been generally taken for granted that the *cherubs* represent angels, which are God's attendants, whose vigour and beauty are ever fresh and immortal, and angels, they say, always appear under the figure of men: and they suppose that in this form multitudes of them were wrought in the curtains and vail, and all the parts of the tabernacle and temple, as intimating the presence of angels where God dwells.

It is granted that cherubs represent angelic powers, attending on the great God, but whether the form of a winged man were wrought on the curtains or vail is yet in doubt: and whether this argument be sufficient to out-weigh all that is said in favour of the shape of winged oxen let the reader judge.

This I think is remarkable, that though *angels* are always introduced speaking as men with a voice, and *Seraphs* also speak, as *Isa.* vi. 3, 6, 7. yet I do not find that *cherubs* ever spoke: and when *Ezekiel* tells us in so distinguishing a manner, *they had the hands of a man under their wings*, *Ezek.* i. 8. it looks as if all the rest of their parts were not exactly those of a man, but  
of

of a creature which is not so much designed to perform rational or human offices; since it appears there, and in other places, as some kind of living vehicle or divine equipage, rather than as a rational attendant on the majesty of God, exercising its intellectual powers.

Perhaps we have not any place of scripture from which we can derive the complete figure of a *cherub* better than the first, and tenth, and forty-first chapters of *Ezekiel*; for all the four animals in *Ezekiel's* vision which are mentioned *Ezek. i. 5.* and *x. 14.* are several times called *cherubs*.

If we enquire what their body or general figure was, the prophet says, it was the figure or *likeness of a man*, *Ezek. i. 5.* But *each of them had four faces, and each had four wings*, ver. 6. *Their legs were straight*, probably like the fore-legs of a calf or ox, or like the legs of a man; and *their feet were cloven as an ox's foot*, ver. 7. *Under their wings they had the hands of a man on their four sides*, ver. 8.

*Each of them had the face of a man before*, and this stood in the middle between *the face of a lion on the right side, and the face of an ox or a calf on the left side*; and *the face of an eagle* perhaps was placed in the middle above them or behind, though it is not expressly said it was behind, or above;  
but

but it is probable the four faces looked four different ways.

But here it must be observed, that what is called the *face of an ox*, Ezek. i. 10. is called the *face of a cherub*, supposing them the same, Ezek. x. 14. A cherub has also the feet of a calf or ox, as before mentioned. So that a cherub appears upon the whole to be nearer to the figures of a winged ox and a man with wings, than to any other creature; for it has the hands, body, and face of a man, and it has also the face and feet of an ox: it has nothing of a lion but the face, and that is not always mentioned: it has indeed the wings of an eagle always, but an eagle's face is mentioned as one part of a cherub no where else but in this vision.

*Note*, This vision does not describe whether each of those animals had four feet or two; but it is probable they had but two feet, because it is said, *they had the likeness of a man*, that is, the figure of his body.

It is plain they had four wings, ver. 6. two of their wings were stretched upward as for flight, and two covered their bodies, that is, the lower part of their body, for which decency requires a covering. It is very ridiculous therefore to describe them, as some painters do, like naked boys, with little wings on their shoulders only.

In



In these four various faces, the various properties of angels seem to be represented, (*viz.*) the understanding and beauty of a man, the obedience and labour or diligence of an ox, the courage and strength of a lion, together with the sharp sight and swiftness of an eagle, in fulfilling the commands of God, and in administering his providence.

It may not be improper also to take notice here, that these four creatures, (*viz.*) a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, are unanimously reported by the *Jews*, though not with sufficient proof, to have been wrought upon the standards of the four leading tribes of the camp of *Israel*, as they are ranged *Numb. ii.* (*viz.*) a lion the standard of *Judah*, a man the standard of *Reuben*, an ox the standard of *Ephraim*, and an eagle the standard of *Dan*. And these also were the figures of the four living creatures, in *Greek ζῶα*, which ought not to be translated *beasts*, *Rev. iv. 6.* that are before the throne of God; who had each of them six wings, and were full of eyes, and are ever engaged in divine worship. These figures in the several places may denote that where ever God is, the creatures that attend him, whether they be men or angels, should be furnished with these qualifications, (*viz.*) understanding, obedience, courage, and swiftness.

But

But let us proceed to search out what is said yet further concerning a *cherub* in scripture.

In *Ezek.* xli. 19, 25. the inner part of *Ezekiel's* temple was adorned with intermingled *cherubs* and *palm-trees* carved on the walls and the doors. Here every cherub had two faces, (*viz.*) that of a man and that of a lion; but as they are called *cherubs*, we may still conclude their feet were the feet of a calf or ox. And why may not *Solomon's* temple be adorned with the same sort of cherubims and palm-trees, 1 *Kings* vi. 29. that is, with the faces of a man and a lion, and the feet of an ox, though their faces are not expressly mentioned in that place.

*Solomon's* ten lavers for the temple, had their several bases adorned in the border between the ledges with lions, oxen and cherubs, 1 *Kings* vii. 29. so that here a *cherub* seems to be mentioned instead of the face of a *man*, and to be distinguished from an *ox*, though in *Ezekiel's* vision, chap. i. and x. the face of a *cherub* is plainly the same with the face of an *ox*. Yet on the plates of the ledges were cherubim, lions and palm-trees, 1 *Kings* vii. 36. where neither the face of an *ox* nor *man* is mentioned.

Perhaps these differences may be in some measure reconciled, if we observe that these  
cherubs

cherubs which adorned the walls of *Ezekiel's* visionary temple, and of *Solomon's* real temple, and the borders of the brazen lavers, are only graven or carved upon the flat or plane, or at least with some little protuberance above the flat, which the *Italians* call *basso rilievo*: and then that figure which would have had all four faces visible, if it had stood forth by itself as a real animal, or a statue, (*viz.*) that of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle, can have but two faces visible, or three at the most, when figured upon a plain or flat surface; the other one or two being hid behind: and thus the cherubs may be in all these places the same four-faced animals, and yet only two or three of their faces appear according to their designed situation and the art of perspective. And perhaps *Solomon* might diversify these figures, for the sake of variety in different parts of these sacred works \*.

\* It is the opinion of some learned men, that *Ezekiel's* temple was but a kind of repetition of the pattern of the same temple which God gave to *David*, and by which *Solomon* built his temple. And that this pattern was given to *Ezekiel* that he might shew it the *Jews*, if they were pious and obedient, to animate them to hope for another temple in their own land, and to instruct them in the building of it when they should be released from *Babylon*, *Ezek* xl. 4. and xliii. 10, 11. since it was supposed none remained who could remember so much of their old temple as to give particular directions for the building of it.

Upon



Upon the whole, what if we should conclude a cherub to be most usually figured with a body like a man with four wings, two whereof are stretched for flight, and two covering the lower parts; with the feet of an ox or calf; with the head of a man or an ox, whatever other faces were joined to it whether lions or eagles, or whether it had any other face or no. It is more likely there was but one sort of face belonged to each of the two cherubs on the mercy-seat, because it is said, their faces looked toward one another; but whether this was the face of an ox or a man, is not yet absolutely determined.

I think we may allow *Jeroboam* to be supposed to imitate these cherubs which were on the mercy-seat, in his idolatrous worship; and though they had not the perfect shape of a calf, yet they might be called *calves* in scripture language, by way of reproach and contempt, because they had the feet of a calf, if not the head also.

It is evident that *Aaron's* idol, which was called the *golden calf*, had more of the resemblance of an ox or calf than of a man, because the *Israelites* are said to *change their glory*, that is their God, *into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass*. *Psalms* cvi. 19, 20. which would hardly have been thus expressed, if the idol had nothing of a calf but its feet.

If

If any will imagine that in *Psalms* xviii. where God is said *to ride upon a cherub*, the grandeur and terror of the appearance may require the whole figure of a flying ox rather than of a flying man, or rather of a flying animal with all these four faces, I will not oppose it; since it is plain, from this whole account, that a cherub is described sometimes, more like a winged ox, and sometimes more like a winged man with feet like oxen or calves. But where it is represented complete in all its various forms united, as in the first and tenth chapters of *Ezekiel*, it seems to be the body of a winged man with calves feet, and with four faces, (*viz.*) that of a man, an ox, a lion and an eagle; and thus it is always designed to represent the various properties of angels, which are attendants upon the blessed God, more perfectly than any one of these creatures could do alone.

Perhaps when the *Jewish* nation shall be converted and become believers in *Christ*, there may be such a new effusion of the Spirit on men, or such a happy discovery some way made of the darker parts of the *Mosaic* æconomy and the writings of the prophets, as may shew us much more of the resemblance which God designed between the types of the law in the temple  
and

and priesthood, and their antitypes in the gospel; than has ever yet appeared; and among other things, the form of a cherub, as an attendance of angelic beings on the majesty of God in the holy of holies, may appear more conspicuously in its original truth and glory.

F I N I S.



